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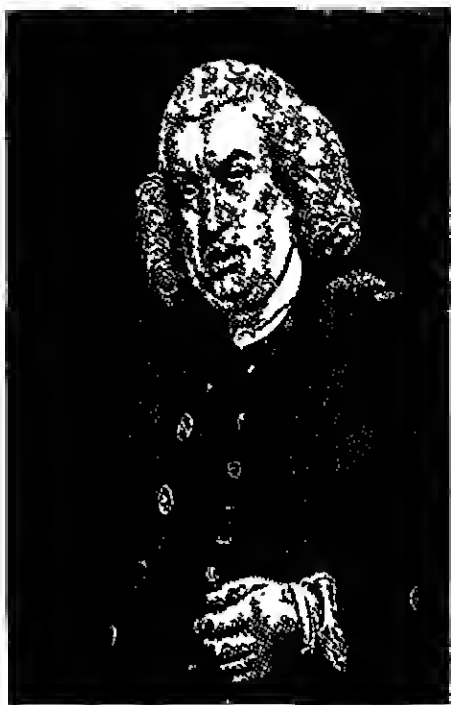
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The JOURNAL *of a*
TOUR TO THE HEBRIDES
with SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.



DR JOHNSON

From the painting executed by Sir Joshua Reynolds in 1773

Frontispiece

The JOURNAL *of a*
TOUR TO THE HEBRIDES
with SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

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PREFACE

THE passages selected are those considered to be of most interest to young readers. The story of the journey has been kept continuous. The Introduction is *really* intended to be read first, so that the pupils may make the acquaintance of Dr Johnson before they join him and Boswell on their tour.

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INTRODUCTION

SAMUEL JOHNSON was born at Lichfield, an old cathedral city in Staffordshire, on the 18th of September 1709. He was the son of Michael Johnson, a bookseller and stationer. From his father he inherited a large and powerful frame and a strong and active mind, but, also, unfortunately, a tendency to a morbid melancholy. In early childhood he developed scrofula, the disease known as "king's evil," because there was a superstition that it could be cured by the touch of a king's hand. This disease causes unsightly eruptions on the skin, so that throughout his life Johnson's face was badly disfigured. His eyesight was also very much impaired, and he could read only by holding the written or printed paper very close to his eyes. In spite of this drawback he was as a boy a very diligent student, and, having a quick and tenacious memory, he very early acquired a wide and deep learning.

He was educated, up to the age of fifteen, at Lichfield Grammar School, where he was easily the best scholar, and where, in spite of the fact that he could not, because of his defective eyesight, share in the sports of the boys, he was held in great esteem by them. He then spent a year at Stourbridge School, but did not receive there as much benefit as was expected, probably because he did not get on well with the headmaster. "Mr Wentworth (he told me [*i.e.* Boswell]) was a very able man, but an idle man, and to me very severe; but I cannot blame him much. I was then a big boy: he saw I did not reverence him, and that he should get no honour by me. I had brought enough with me to carry me through; and all I should get at his school would be ascribed to my own labour, or to my former master. Yet he taught me a

great deal." The next two years he spent at home, in what he called idleness. Yet he read a great deal, much of it in strange and out-of-the-way books which he found on the shelves of his father's shop. "He used to mention one curious instance of his casual reading. Having imagined that his brother had hid some apples behind a large folio upon an upper shelf in his father's shop, he climbed up to search for them. There were no apples; but the large folio proved to be Petrarch, whom he had seen mentioned, in some preface, as one of the restorers of learning. His curiosity having been thus excited, he sat down with avidity, and read a great part of the book. What he read during these two years, he told me [Boswell], was not works of mere amusement, 'not voyages and travels, but all literature, sir, all ancient writers, all manly; though but little Greek: but in this irregular manner I had looked into a great many books, which were not commonly known at the universities, where they seldom read any books but what are put into their hands by their tutors; so that when I came to Oxford, Dr Adams, now master of Pembroke College, told me I was the best qualified for the university that had ever come there.'"

A struggling country bookseller could hardly afford to send his son to Oxford University, but a Shropshire gentleman who had been Samuel's schoolfellow offered to maintain him in the office of companion, and so he was entered at Pembroke College in October 1728. Unfortunately the gentleman failed to keep his promise, he obtained but scanty supplies of money from home, and when these ceased altogether through his father's bankruptcy he had to leave the university after a stay of fourteen months only. Long afterwards when Boswell reported to Johnson the story of his tutor, Dr Adams, that "he was caressed and loved by all about him, was a gay and frolicsome fellow, and passed there the happiest part of his life," Johnson replied: "Ah, sir, I was mad and violent. It was bitterness which they mistook for frolic. I was miserably poor, and I thought to fight my way by

literature and my wit; so I disregarded all power and all authority." Though so poor, Johnson was proud, and when a fellow-collegian who had noted the wretched state of his shoes put a new pair at the door of his room, Johnson angrily flung them away.

His name remained on the register of Pembroke College till October 1731, but he had not returned there. For a short time he was an usher in the Grammar School of Market Bosworth, in Leicestershire. His experience was hateful to him, and he always thereafter looked upon an ushership as wretched drudgery. His father having died in December of this year, he stayed with a family friend in Birmingham for six months, and then settled in that city doing literary work for its leading bookseller. One of the friends he made there was a Mr Porter, a draper, after whose death he married his widow. She was forty-seven and he was twenty-six, but despite this great discrepancy in age the marriage turned out a happy one, and Johnson cherished his wife with the greatest fondness till her death in 1752, and mourned her loss deeply to the end of his days. With the seven or eight hundred pounds that she possessed Johnson set up a school. In *The Gentleman's Magazine* for 1736 appeared this advertisement: "At Edial, near Lichfield, in Staffordshire, young gentlemen are boarded and taught the Latin and Greek tongues by SAMUEL JOHNSON." One of his pupils was David Garrick, afterwards the most famous actor of his day, who used to say that Johnson's scholars were three in number, himself and his brother George, and a boy named Offely. Though Garrick spoke in fun, and there were certainly more pupils, the school was a failure, and he gave it up at the end of eighteen months.

He then, in company with David Garrick, went to London, Garrick to complete his education, Johnson to seek work from the London booksellers. He used to tell the story in later life of how one of them, Wilcox, eyeing his massive and robust frame, advised him to take a job as a porter. Having found the means of making a livelihood, he returned to Lichfield for his wife. They settled

first in a house near Bond Street, but all Johnson's later residences were in the neighbourhood of the Strand and Fleet Street, which he declared to be the finest situation in the world for a man's home. For some years he had a hard struggle to make ends meet, as back-work done for the booksellers was miserably paid. There is an allusion to these bare times at the close of his poem, *London, a Satire*, which was published in 1738. The last line was printed in capitals:

"This mournful truth is everywhere confess'd,
SLOW RISES WORTH BY POVERTY DEPRESSED."

Boswell tells us that he was always reluctant in later life to speak of these days of bitter stress and struggle, and that "a full, fair and most particular account of his own life from his earliest recollections" which he had written in two quarto volumes he committed to the flames. His successful years are known to us intimately through Boswell's biography. We can only guess at his early ones in London. In Macaulay's words: "Johnson grown old, Johnson in the fullness of his fame and in the enjoyment of a competent fortune, is better known to us than any other man in history. Everything about him, his coat, his wig, his figure, his face, his scrofula, his St Vitus's dance, his rolling walk, his blinking eye, the outward signs which too clearly marked his approbation of his dinner, his insatiable appetite for fish-sauce and veal-pie with plums, his inextinguishable thirst for tea, his trick of touching the posts as he walked, his mysterious practice of treasuring up scraps of orange-peel, his morning slumbers, his midnight disputations, his contortions, his mutterings, his gruntings, his puffings, his vigorous, acute, and ready eloquence, his sarcastic wit, his vehemence, his insolence, his fits of tempestuous rage, his queer inmates, old Mr Levett and blind Mrs Williams, the cat Hodge and the negro Frank, all are as familiar to us as the objects by which we have been surrounded from childhood. But we have no minute information respecting those years of Johnson's life during which his character

and his manners became immutably fixed. We know him, not as he was known to the men of his own generation, but as he was known to men whose father he might have been."

His drudgery for the booksellers, however, did not occupy all his time, and he wrote some things to please himself—a tragedy, *Irene*, another satire in heroic couplets, *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, and from March 1750 to March 1752 *The Rambler*, a periodical essay on the lines of *The Spectator*, appearing every Tuesday and Saturday. In 1749 Garrick became manager of Drury Lane Theatre, and one of the first things he did in that capacity was to produce his old friend's tragedy. Though the characters were presented by the finest actors and actresses of the day, it did not please the public, and was withdrawn after nine performances. By this time, however, Johnson was well known as a man of letters, and *The Rambler*, which contains some of his finest prose, added to his fame. His circle of friends grew larger and more influential, his work was better paid, and his means were beginning to be quite comfortable, when he lost his wife in the spring of 1752.

In 1747 he had published a plan or prospectus for his *Dictionary*, which he proposed to complete in three years. When Dr Adams pointed out to him that it had taken forty French scholars forty years to compile the famous dictionary of the French Academy, Johnson playfully replied: "Sir, thus it is. This is the proportion. Let me see; forty times forty is sixteen hundred. As three is to sixteen hundred so is the proportion of an Englishman to a Frenchman." At the request of the booksellers, Johnson dedicated his plan to the Earl of Chesterfield, then one of the principal Secretaries of State. In those days it was customary for men of letters to dedicate their books to some great nobleman, whose patronage was thought to conduce to the success of the publications, and who were expected to reward the authors personally for the honour paid them. Johnson's spirit of sturdy independence had hitherto prevented

him from courting the favour of the great in this way. Johnson's one experiment was unfortunate. Chesterfield did not give the plan the support and attention expected, and Johnson with the aid of six copyists completed the *Dictionary*, which was published in 1755, and was hailed with a chorus of approval. Just before it appeared Lord Chesterfield had written two articles in *The World* recommending it to the public. For seven years he had treated the project with neglect. Johnson thought that he was now desirous of posing as the patron of the *Dictionary*, and so sent him the famous letter which killed literary patronage for ever:

To the RIGHT HONOURABLE THE
EARL OF CHESTERFIELD

February 7th, 1755.

MY LORD,—

I have been lately informed, by the proprietor of *The World*, that two papers in which my *Dictionary* is recommended to the public were written by your Lordship. To be so distinguished is an honour, which, being very little accustomed to favours from the great, I know not well how to receive, or in what terms to acknowledge.

When, upon some slight encouragement, I first visited your Lordship, I was overpowered, like the rest of mankind, by the enchantment of your address, and could not forbear to wish that I might boast myself *Le vainqueur du vainqueur de la terre*;—that I might obtain that regard for which I saw the world contending; but I found my attendance so little encouraged, that neither pride nor modesty would suffer me to continue it. When I had once addressed your Lordship in public, I had exhausted all the art of pleasing which a retired and uncourtly scholar can possess. I had done all that I could; and no man is well pleased to have his all neglected, be it ever so little.

Seven years, my Lord, have now passed since I waited in your outward rooms, or was repulsed from your door; during which time I have been pushing on my work through difficulties, of which it is useless to complain,

and have brought it, at last, to the verge of publication, without one act of assistance, one word of encouragement, or one smile of favour. Such treatment I did not expect, for I never had a Patron before.

The shepherd in Virgil grew at last acquainted with Love, and found him a native of the rocks.

Is not a Patron, my Lord, one who looks with unconcern on a man struggling for life in the water, and when he has reached ground, encumbers him with help? The notice which you have been pleased to take of my labours, had it been early, had been kind; but it has been delayed till I am indifferent, and cannot enjoy it; till I am solitary, and cannot impart it; till I am known, and do not want it. I hope it is no very cynical asperity not to confess obligations where no benefit has been received, or to be unwilling that the public should consider me as owing that to a Patron, which Providence has enabled me to do for myself.

Having carried on my work thus far with so little obligation to any favourer of learning, I shall not be disappointed though I should conclude it, if less be possible, with less; for I have been long awakened from that dream of hope, in which I once boasted myself with so much exultation, my Lord.

Your Lordship's most humble,
Most obedient servant,
SAM. JOHNSON."

On the title-page of the *Dictionary* his name is followed by the letters A.M. These stand for *Artium Magister*—that is, Master of Arts, a degree which his old university had conferred upon him, *honoris causa*, immediately before the *Dictionary* was published. Johnson's fame was now complete. Henceforth he was recognised as the greatest living author, and occupied in London literary circles the kingly office that had been held in Charles II.'s time by Dryden ("Glorious John") and in James I.'s by Ben Jonson—dictator of the world of letters. The most eminent men of his day courted his friendship. For he

was a great talker. Nothing delighted him so much as conversation—not desultory, but upon definite themes. He talked for victory—that is, to get the better of his opponents in argument—and sometimes, for the sake of argument, he would take up the side that he knew to be wrong, and maintain it as aggressively as he would have done the right. It was his love of conversation that led him to set up the famous clubs that are associated with his name, the most renowned of which was the Literary Club, founded in 1764. It met at the Turk's Head Tavern in Soho, and of its original ten members the most famous, besides Johnson, were Sir Joshua Reynolds, the painter, Edmund Burke, author and statesman, and Oliver Goldsmith, poet and novelist. Its existence continued into the nineteenth century. Later members included Garrick and James Boswell.

The following year he was introduced to Henry Thrale, a rich Southwark brewer, and his charming and vivacious wife. For sixteen years he had the freedom of Mr Thrale's houses both in the city and in the country, and many of his happiest hours were spent there. He had a great affection for Mrs Thrale, which was not broken until after her first husband's death she married (in 1784) an Italian musician named Piozzi. As Mrs Piozzi she wrote her reminiscences of Dr Johnson, which are extremely interesting, though not so trustworthy as Boswell's. He had plenty of leisure to visit his friends, and to devote to his clubs, for in 1762 George III. had conferred on him a pension of £300 a year in recognition of his great services to literature. So, after his novel of *Rasselas*, which he is said to have written in a week in order to raise funds to pay for his mother's funeral, he did not again need to write for a living, but only when he pleased. He edited the plays of Shakespeare (1765), wrote at various times a number of political tracts, published an account of his *Journey to the Western Isles of Scotland* (1775), and compiled the *Lives of the Most Eminent English Poets, with Critical Observations on their Works* (1781). Both Dublin University and his

old university of Oxford honoured him with the degree of LL.D. (Doctor of Laws).

Dr Johnson's style of writing seems heavy to us, because he was fond of using long words derived from Latin, arranging them in certain definite ways, and maintaining a stately rhythm. As he grew older he cultivated a simpler style, and his last work is the easiest to read. The same ornate and dignified qualities are found in his talk as reported by Boswell. Yet he had a keen sense of humour, which flashes even through Boswell's notes, and we know that he could write gay and witty letters to his female correspondents. Boswell wished to include in his biography some of the letters written to Fanny Burney, the authoress of *Evelina* and daughter of one of Johnson's oldest friends. "We have seen him long enough upon stilts; I want to show him in a new light. Grave Sam and great Sam and solemn Sam and learned Sam—all these he has appeared over and over. Now I want to entwine a wreath of graces across his brow; I want to show him as gay Sam, agreeable Sam, pleasant Sam; so you must help me with some of his beautiful billets to yourself." But Miss Burney refused her permission.

The most familiar descriptions of Johnson and Boswell are Macaulay's, but they are to be read with caution. Macaulay's style is seductive, but his picturesqueness of phrase and wealth of illustrative allusions are not to blind us to his frequent political and literary bias, his dogmatic judgments, and his suppressions and exaggerations of the truth. Johnson was not the clumsy, slovenly, boorish, aggressive, overbearing genius that Macaulay has depicted. You have only to turn from Macaulay's glittering essay to the great biography itself to have your views immediately corrected; but even Boswell himself sometimes needs a corrective commentary, which happily can be found in a dozen other volumes of reminiscences of our most typically English man of letters. Macaulay's lively caricature was based on Boswell, of course, from whom he seized upon a number of succulent details and

dressed them with his own over-piquant sauce. One example must suffice. Boswell says: "I never knew any man who relished good eating as he did. When at table, he was totally absorbed in the business of the moment; his looks seemed riveted to his plate; nor would he, unless when in very high company, say one word, or even pay the least attention to what was said by others, till he had satisfied his appetite, which was so fierce, and indulged with such intenseness that, while in the act of eating, the veins of his forehead swelled, and generally a strong perspiration was visible." Now hear Dr Percy, the editor of *The Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, the Bishop of Dromore, with whom Dr Johnson had stayed for many weeks, and who had often dined with him at the club: "He ate heartily, having a good appetite, but not with the voraciousness described by Mr Boswell, all whose extravagant accounts must be read with caution and abatement." Again, Richard Cumberland: "He fed heartily but not voraciously, and was extremely courteous in his commendation of any dish that pleased his palate." And Boswell himself in his *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides*: "I observed that he was disgusted whenever he met with coarse manners." And this is what Macaulay makes of it: "The old philosopher is still among us, in the brown coat with the metal buttons and the shirt which ought to be at wash, blinking, puffing, rolling his head, drumming with his fingers, tearing his meat like a tiger, and swallowing his tea in oceans."

In the other case Macaulay taught his readers to regard Boswell as a vain fop who happened to write a great book by a lucky accident. Boswell has not lacked defenders, from Leslie Stephen* onwards, and those who have known their eighteenth century best have been his warmest admirers. Boswell was a man of genius, and the only lucky accident was the conjunction of two such stars: there is not so fortunate an incident in the whole range of literature as the meeting of Boswell and Johnson.

A mistaken notion of the ordinary man is that Dr

Johnson had a profound and most unreasoning prejudice against Scotland and everything Scottish. There is no evidence to show that his prejudice differed either in degree or in kind from that of the average Englishman of his day, or, I might venture to say, of our own day also. Only he had the gift of powerful and emphatic expression, and some of his sayings have been reported by a Scotsman. Since King James I. was followed to London by a crowd of needy Scots noblemen and lairds the Caledonian invasion and peaceful penetration of England have never ceased. Englishmen charged the Scot amongst them with being pushing, self-assertive, secretive, parsimonious, clannish, name-proud.

The gibe that the Scot comes from a poor country to a rich one is no longer in place, but in the eighteenth century it still had force, and Johnson was not slow to make it. The happiest hunting-ground was London, and in those dreary years of poverty and struggle of which Boswell can tell us nothing, it is possible, nay, almost certain, that Johnson rubbed against not a few from over the border who had come to seek their fortunes. His own ill-success may have deepened his natural prejudice into a gloomy resentment that darkened his views for many a year, but we have no direct evidence on the point. Boswell did not meet him until after the publication of his *Dictionary*, and he always found Johnson reluctant to speak of his distresses. There is a kind of sarcastic humour about most of his gibes, as in the *Dictionary* definition of "oats"—a food for horses in England and men in Scotland—which brought forth the happy retort of Lord Eliza, "Where will you find better horses and better men?" though one notes a touch of what I call super-patriotism, *Scotland-über-alles-ism*, in the close of the question.

Now it is this very super-patriotism, what Boswell calls *nationality*, at which Johnson usually tilts, and I suspect that it was because Boswell was by no means free from it that most of the examples occurred. That his Scottish sensitiveness is hurt appears usually in the very way in

which he tells his story. And this hyper-sensitiveness is one of the elements in the super-patriotism. On the way from Ulinish to Talisker he says: "As we sailed along, Dr Johnson got into one of his fits of railing against the Scots. He owned that they had been a very learned nation for a hundred years, from about 1550 to about 1650; but that they afforded the only instance of a people among whom the arts of civil life did not advance in proportion with learning; that they had hardly any trade, any money, or any elegance, before the Union; that it was strange that, with all the advantages possessed by other nations, they had not any of those conveniences and embellishments which are the fruit of industry, till they came in contact with a civilised people. 'We have taught you,' said he, 'and we'll do the same in time to all barbarous nations, to the Cherokees, and at last to the Ouran-Outangs,' laughing with as much glee as if Lord Monboddo* were present. BOSWELL, anxious as usual to speak up for his country: 'We had wice before the Union.' JOHNSON: 'No, sir; you had some weak stuff, the refuse of France, which would not make you drunk.' BOSWELL: 'I assure you, sir, there was a great deal of drunkenness.' JOHNSON: 'No, sir; there were people who died of dropsies, which they contracted in trying to get drunk.'"

Now Johnson would, I have no doubt, speak in his usual magisterial tones, but to me it seems obvious that he was not really serious, while poor Boswell was painfully eager to put Scotland in a *good* light, even in the matter of drunkenness. Johnson had been a lover of good wine, but had been an abstainer for several years at the time of this incident. Whisky he evidently regarded as not a civilised beverage, but one fit only for barbarians. It was then little known outside Scotland. Johnson confessed that he often, for the sake of argument, took the opposite side on any proposition and made statements without conviction. It is a theory of mine that his disparagement of Scotland may have started in this way. Among his oldest friends or acquaintances antecedent to his meeting Boswell

we know of several Scotsmen. Fellow-workers for *The Gentleman's Magazine* were William Guthrie, whom he aided and then succeeded as editor of the *Parliamentary Debates*, and a Mr Macbean, whom he recommended personally to Edward Cave; five of his six assistants in the compilation of his *Dictionary* were Scotsmen—the two Macbeans, Shiels, Stewart (son of an Edinburgh bookseller) and Maitland; one of the publishers who combined to bring out the *Dictionary*, Andrew Millar, was a Scotsman; and he was on particularly intimate terms with Mr Strahan, a Scottish printer in London. Some of them, to be sure, were at the time lower on the ladder of fortune than he was. Only one of them is known to have been subsequently in distress—Shiels—and he was generously helped by Johnson when his own means were still comparatively straitened. It is permissible to surmise that Johnson's communion with these brought him into acquaintance with Scotsmen in other walks of life. Here is ample room for Johnson to rub up against some of the more emphatic traits in Scottish character, and to have his own national predilections strongly aroused in opposition. Boswell remarks in his *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides*: "If he was particularly prejudiced against the Scotch, it was because they were more in his way; because he thought their success in England rather exceeded the due proportion of their real merit; and because he could not but see in them that *nationality* which, I believe, no liberal-minded Scotchman will deny."

Andrew Millar, whose bookshop was in the Strand, took the principal charge in the publication of the *Dictionary*, and was often annoyed by Johnson's failure to have the sheets ready for the printer in time. He would appear to have badgered Johnson mercilessly to get his work done more quickly, especially as the sheets were all paid for in advance. "When the messenger who carried the last sheet to Millar returned, Johnson asked him—Well, what did he say?—Sir, he said, Thank God I have done with him.—I am glad, replied Johnson with a smile,

that he thanks God for anything." Millar made a rapid fortune, which he used with great liberality. He was himself no great judge of literature, but had shrewd sense, and trusted in the advice of his literary friends to guide him wisely in his purchase of copyrights. On another occasion Johnson said: "Sir, I respect Millar. He has raised the price of literature." Strahan also was a very prosperous and generous man. Wherever Johnson found real merit in a Scotsman even in those early days he acknowledged it. To Thomas Ruddiman, the Edinburgh man of letters, he sent a complimentary copy of his *Rambler*, in six volumes. In his later days, when he was the undisputed king of literary London, he had many Scottish friends, like Adam Smith, author of *The Wealth of Nations*, who was a member of the Literary Club, which Johnson founded, Doctor Hugh Blair, the philosopher and divine, and James Beattie, the poet. His prejudice against the Scots was of the same type as his perservid attachment to the cause of the exiled Stuarts, which did not prevent him from supporting the Hanoverian dynasty, and his profound abhorrence of Whig policy, which did not mar his close personal friendship with individual Whigs. It was to two Scotsmen that he owed his pension of £300 a year, bestowed on him in virtue of the services rendered to the language by his *Dictionary*—Alexander Wedderburn urged his claims successfully on Lord Bute, then Prime Minister. Wedderburn afterwards became Lord Chancellor of England, under the title of Lord Loughborough, an event which led Boswell to remark; "It affords animating encouragement to other gentlemen of North Britain to try their fortunes in the southern part of the island, where they may hope to gratify their utmost ambition."

The greatest of all biographers introduces himself into the *Life of Johnson* with the words: "Enter Boswell." Never was there so significant an entry. Boswell was twenty-three, Johnson was fifty-four. He was the son of Lord Auchinleck, a judge in the Court of Session and an Ayrshire laird, who was as zealous in his Whiggery as

Johnson was fierce in his Toryism. The young man had just finished his law studies in the universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow, and was starting for the Continent, ostensibly to continue his studies at Utrecht, but actually to make the grand tour and see as many celebrities as possible. He remained abroad for three years, and among others contrived to meet Voltaire, Rousseau, Jack Wilkes, and Pascal Paoli, the Corsican patriot, whom he afterwards introduced to Johnson in London. Soon after his return to Edinburgh he was admitted Advocate, and two years later published his first literary work, *A Tour in Corsica*. It was a very good piece of work for so young a man, and Johnson's admiration for it served to cement the strange friendship that Boswell sought and maintained with such persistence. The introduction took place through the good offices of Thomas Davies, the bookseller, in the back parlour of his shop. Boswell shall tell the story himself:

"At last, on Monday the 16th of May (1763), when I was sitting in Mr Davies's back parlour, after having drunk tea with him and Mrs Davies, Johnson unexpectedly came into the shop; and Mr Davies having perceived him through the glass door in the room in which we were sitting, advancing towards us—he announced his awful approach to me, somewhat in the manner of an actor in the part of Horatio, when he addresses Hamlet on the appearance of his father's ghost, 'Look, my lord, it comes.' I found that I had a very perfect idea of Johnson's figure, from the portrait of him painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds soon after he had published his *Dictionary*, in the attitude of sitting in his easy-chair in deep meditation. . . . Mr Davies mentioned my name, and respectfully introduced me to him. I was much agitated; and recollecting his prejudice against the Scotch, of which I had heard much, I said to Davies, 'Don't tell where I come from.'—'From Scotland,' cried Davies roguishly. 'Mr Johnson,' said I, 'I do indeed come from Scotland, but I cannot help it.' I am willing to flatter myself that I meant this as light pleasantry to

soothe and conciliate him, and not as any humiliating abasement at the expense of my country. But however that might be, this speech was somewhat unlucky; for with that quickness of wit for which he was so remarkable, he seized the expression 'come from Scotland,' which I used in the sense of being of that country; and as if I had said I had come away from it or left it, retorted, 'That, sir, I find, is what a very great many of your countrymen cannot help.'

Poor Boswell was stunned by this rebuff, but he got a worse one when he next intervened in the talk. Nevertheless he took mental notes of the whole scene and conversation and has vividly reproduced it for us. A few days later he called on Johnson, who received him very courteously. From that day to Johnson's death Boswell seized every opportunity of being in his company, and faithfully recorded every incident that came under his own notice, and collected from every possible source details of Johnson's life and opinions. When someone once asked, "Who is this Scotch cur at Johnson's heels?" Goldsmith replied: "He is not a cur; he is only a burr. Tom Davies flung him at Johnson in sport, and he has the faculty of sticking." And years afterwards Boswell's wife was provoked by his idolatry to remark that she had often seen a man leading a bear, but had never before observed a bear leading a man. The allusion is of course to Johnson's nickname of Ursa Major or the Great Bear.

Boswell remained in London for some months and diligently cultivated his new acquaintance. On one occasion he entertained Johnson and other friends to dinner at the Mitre Tavern. Amongst the company was a Mr Ogilvie, who "was unlucky enough to choose for the topic of his conversation the praises of his native country. He began by saying that there was very rich land round Edinburgh. Goldsmith, who had studied physic there, contradicted this, *very untruly*, with a sneering laugh. Disconcerted a little by this, Mr Ogilvie then took new ground, where, I suppose, he thought himself perfectly safe, for he observed that Scotland had a great many

noble wild prospects. JOHNSON: 'I believe, sir, you have a great many. Norway, too, has noble wild prospects; and Lapland is remarkable for prodigious noble wild prospects. But, sir, let me tell you, the noblest prospect which a Scotchman ever sees is the high road that leads him to England!' This unexpected and pointed sally produced a roar of applause." Boswell naively remarks: "After all, however, those who admire the rude grandeur of Nature cannot deny it to Caledonia."

Then the journey to the Western Isles was first mooted. Johnson, who as a young boy had read and been greatly struck by Martin's account of those islands, playfully suggested that when Boswell returned from his travels he should make the Highland tour with him. Boswell returned to London in 1766, and again spent most of his time in Johnson's company. His next visit was in 1769, just before his marriage, when he regrets that he will not be able to visit him so often as when he was a single man. At Mrs Thrale's he played off his wit against Scotland. Boswell remarked that England was obliged to the north for gardeners, almost all their good gardeners being Scotsmen. JOHNSON: "Why, sir, that is because gardening is much more necessary amongst you than with us. . . . Things which grow wild here must be cultivated with great care in Scotland. Pray now (throwing himself back in his chair and laughing), are you ever able to bring the *sloe* to perfection?"

Three years later Boswell was in London again, and his Johnson records are very full. He reopened the question of Johnson's coming to Scotland, and when he renewed his visit the following year he extracted from the old philosopher a definite promise to attempt the journey that had been mooted ten years before. He arrived in Edinburgh on the 14th of August 1773, and put up at Boyd's Inn (sign of the White Horse), at the head of the Canongate. Boswell found him there, and took him to his own house, his wife giving up her bedroom to the old sage. From Edinburgh the two travelled by St Andrews, Dundee and Montrose to Aberdeen (21st August), visiting

Slains Castle and the Bùllers of Buchan. Then they struck westwards by Banff, Cullen and Elgin to Inverness. The editor of Shakespeare and friend of Garrick was particularly interested in his visit to Forres and Cawdor. From Inverness they followed the present line of the Caledonian Canal to Glenelg and there took boat to Raasay. They made a circular tour of Skye, and stayed with Macleod of Macleod and with Flora Macdonald and her husband. On their way to Mull they were driven by a hurricane to find shelter in Coll, where they were storm-stayed for ten days. Eventually reaching Tobermory, they paid a visit to Iona, of which Johnson has given us the finest description ever written. After a week's stay in Mull, they sailed from Lochbuie to the mainland, visited the Duke of Argyll at Inveraray, and Sir James Colquhoun at Luss. The old man climbed Dumbarton Rock. By Glasgow, Loudoun (where they dined with the Earl), Dundonald (visiting at Auchans the Dowager Countess of Eglintoun, then in her eighty-sixth year), they came to Auchinleck, the seat of Boswell's father (2nd November). They returned to Edinburgh on 9th November, having been absent eighty-three days, and for five weeks of it tempestuous weather had cut them off from all communion with their friends.

Johnson had been thrown into the company of all sorts and conditions of Scotsmen—a duke, lords, lairds, Highland chieftains, professors, ministers, servants, grooms, crofters and gillies. He had been entertained by Highland and Lowland ladies of gentle birth. He who said that life was not worth living outside London had spent days amid the wildest and loveliest scenery in Scotland, had enjoyed himself hugely and had won golden opinions everywhere. He had disputed on literary, political and moral themes in his usual masterful way, and had raised one or two argumentative storms that left no bitterness. His journey was a good thing for him, and a good thing for Scotland. Both the travellers have left us accounts of their travels. Johnson's *Journey to the Western Islands* appeared in 1775; Boswell's *Journal of a Tour to the Hebrides* ten

years later. They should be read in immediate sequence. Johnson's book is filled with vivid descriptions and shrewd reflections on men, manners and things. If the style is somewhat pompous, we must remember that the style is the man, and Johnson without his "lang-nebbit" words would not be Johnson at all. Sometimes he falls with rather heavy hand on what he considers worthy of reproof, and his book called forth some rather snappish rejoinders; but the bulk of his Scottish readers, especially the learned and those of high social rank, accepted the book as a worthy commentary on what the Doctor had seen of them and their country, and took some of his lessons to heart. Johnson was especially severe on what he considered the treeless condition of the country. His animadversions on this theme bore good fruit, and we may date from this period the vast extension of planting that made Scotland one of the best-wooded countries in Europe up to the outbreak of the Great War and the subsequent drain upon our domestic supplies of timber.

While in the Highlands he inquired keenly after the existence of ancient Gaelic manuscripts. He had incurred much odium at the hands of fervent Scotsmen by his refusal to accept the genuineness of the poems of Ossian. His inquiries confirmed his opinion that the bulk of the poems, if not the whole of them, was the invention of Macpherson himself, an opinion now universally held by the critics of both kingdoms. "Credulity on one part," he says, "is a strong temptation to deceit on the other, especially to deceit of which no personal injury is the consequence, and which flatters the author with his own ingenuity. The Scotch have something to plead for their easy reception of an improbable fiction: they are seduced by their fondness for their supposed ancestors. A Scotch man must be a very sturdy moralist who does not love Scotland better than truth; he will always love it better than inquiry; and if falsehood flatters his vanity, will not be very diligent to detect it. . . . Of the past and present state of the whole Erse nation (*i.e.* the Highlanders) the Lowlanders are as ignorant as ourselves. To be ignorant

is painful; but it is dangerous to quiet our uneasiness by the delusive opiate of hasty persuasion."

Boswell's book is really a diary (or journal) which he jotted down from day to day in the course of the journey. It is twice as long as Johnson's, but one could easily wish it longer. The author regrets that he had neglected on more than one occasion to write up his diary on account of laziness or indisposition, and that his memory could not recapture the incidents and the details of conversation. We share his regret. Boswell as usual quaintly blended his hero-worship with a desire to show Scotland at her best. He needed all his skill to placate the gruff philosopher until they had left Inverness, but once they had reached the Western Isles his anxieties were over, for the Doctor thoroughly enjoyed himself, and was on the best of terms with everybody he met. He left an impression which has not been effaced to this day.

Then the old philosopher returned to London, having left a bad impression, as far as we can learn, on only two people—Boswell's wife and Boswell's father. Mrs Boswell did not share her husband's admiration for the Great Lexicographer—she was, with justice, somewhat jealous of his devotion, and annoyed by his frequent trauancies to London to spend weeks in his company. Johnson, too, had spoilt her best carpets by holding candles upside down to make them burn better, and she was shocked at the tea-drinking capacities of a man who could swallow fourteen cups at a sitting when tea and sugar were extremely high-priced luxuries. Boswell seems, when he took Johnson to call on his father at Auchinleck, to have been horribly afraid that the visit would lead to ructions. Both *the old men were irascible and sarcastic, both were hardened in prejudices and forceful in argument.* Johnson was an ardent Tory, Lord Auchinleck a fierce Whig. He had never read any of Johnson's works, and spoke disdainfully of his Jamie's friend as "a Jacobite fellow."

After Johnson's return to London his letters to Boswell show not only an increased affection for the recipient himself, but a kindlier interest in everything relating to



Dorrell

Johnson

Reynolds

Garrett

Burke

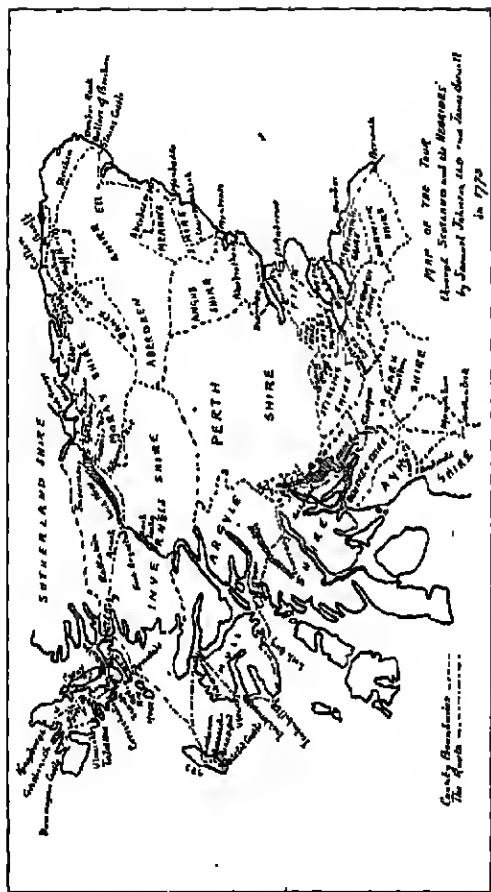
Burney

Warton

Goldsmith

AT SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS'S

Scotland. Boswell used to lay before his friend the cases on which he was engaged as an advocate, and profited much by the shrewdness and fine judgment of one who, though entirely ignorant of Scots law, has excited the admiration of trained lawyers by his subtle analyses of evidence and points of equity. The two had other tours together—to the Midlands, to Bath, to Derby, to Oxford. More Scotsmen were brought into the charmed circle, but there were no more gibes at their nationality. Johnson's older friends began to drop away one by one—Goldsmith, Mr Thrale, William Strahan, Garrick, Beauchamp, Levett. In the spring of 1784 he himself had a serious illness, but recovered sufficiently to visit Oxford in Boswell's company in June. On 30th June Boswell dined with him at Sir Joshua Reynolds's, and this was the last time they were together. He died on 13th December in the same year. Boswell lost his wife four years later. Always overfond of wine, he sank into deeper and deeper indulgence, from which his engrossing work on the *Life of Johnson* did not rescue him, and four years after the completion of the biography in 1791, at the age of fifty-five, he died, a victim to his habits of intemperance and folly. Thanks to Boswell, no man in all the history of literature is better known to us than Doctor Johnson. We can live with him, hear him talk and see him gesticulate. We can pierce beneath the outer roughness to the tender heart within. We can see the smile that plays around his mouth as he utters his fiercest gibe, and rest assured that there is no malice or real disdain in his humorous blows at Scots and Scotland.



The JOURNAL of a
TOUR to the HEBRIDES with
SAMUEL JOHNSON, LL.D.

DR JOHNSON had for many years given me hopes that we should go together, and visit the Hebrides. Martin's Account of those islands had impressed us with a notion that we might there contemplate a system of life almost totally different from what we had been accustomed to see; and, to find simplicity and wildness, and all the circumstances of remote time or place, so near to our native great island, was an object within the reach of reasonable curiosity. Dr Johnson has said in his *Journey*, "that he scarcely remembered how the wish to visit the Hebrides was excited"; but he told me, in summer, 1763, that his father put Martin's Account into his hands when he was very young, and that he was much pleased with it. We reckoned there would be some inconveniences and hardships, and perhaps a little danger; but these we were persuaded were magnified in the imagination of everybody. I was not afraid that our curious expedition would be prevented by such apprehensions; but I doubted that it would not be possible to prevail on Dr Johnson to relinquish, for some time, the felicity of a London life, which, to a man who can enjoy it with full intellectual relish, is apt to make existence in any narrower sphere seem insipid or irksome. I doubted that he would not be willing to come down from his elevated state of philosophical dignity; from a superiority of wisdom among the wise, and of learning among the learned; and from flashing his wit upon minds bright enough to reflect it.

He had disappointed my expectations so long, that I began to despair; but in spring, 1773, he talked of coming

to Scotland that year with so much firmness, that I hoped he was at last in earnest. I knew that, if he were once launched from the metropolis, he would go forward very well; and I got our common friends there to assist in setting him afloat. To Mrs Thrale in particular, whose enchantment over him seldom failed, I was much obliged. It was, "*I'll give thee a wind.*"—"Thou art kind."—To attract him, we had invitations from the chiefs Macdonald and Macleod; and, for additional aid, I wrote to Lord Ellhank,* Dr William Robertson,* and Dr Beattie.*

Luckily Mr Justice (now Sir Robert) Chambers, who was about to sail for the East Indies, was going to take leave of his relations at Newcastle, and he conducted Dr Johnson to that town. Mr Scott, of University College, Oxford (now Dr Scott of the Commons), accompanied him from thence to Edinburgh. With such propitious convoys did he proceed to my native city. But, lest metaphor should make it be supposed he actually went by sea, I choose to mention that he travelled in post-chaises, of which the rapid motion was one of his most favourite amusements.

Dr Samuel Johnson's character, religious, moral, political, and literary, nay his figure and manner, are, I believe, more generally known than those of almost any man; yet it may not be superfluous here to attempt a sketch of him. Let my readers then remember that he was a sincere and zealous Christian, of High Church of England and monarchical principles, which he would not tamely suffer to be questioned; steady and inflexible in maintaining the obligations of piety and virtue, both from a regard to the order of society, and from a veneration for the Great Source of all order; correct, nay stern in his taste; hard to please, and easily offended, impetuous and irritable in his temper, but of a most humane and benevolent heart; having a mind stored with a vast and various collection of learning and knowledge, which he communicated with peculiar perspicuity and force, in rich and choice expression. He united a most logical head with a most fertile imagination, which gave him an extraordinary advantage

in arguing; for he could reason close or wide, as he saw best for the moment. He could, when he chose it, be the greatest sophist* that ever wielded a weapon in the schools of declamation; but he indulged this only in conversation; for he owned he sometimes talked for victory; he was too conscientious to make error* permanent and pernicious, by deliberately writing it. He was conscious of his superiority. He loved praise when it was brought to him; but was too proud to seek for it. He was somewhat susceptible of flattery. His mind was so full of imagery, that he might have been perpetually a poet. It has been often remarked, that in his poetical pieces, which it is to be regretted are so few, because so excellent, his style is easier than in his prose. There is deception in this: it is not easier, but better suited to the dignity of verse; as one may dance with grace, whose motions, in ordinary walking,—in the common step, are awkward. He had a constitutional melancholy, the clouds of which darkened the brightness of his fancy, and gave a gloomy cast to his whole course of thinking: yet, though grave and awful in his deportment, when he thought it necessary or proper,—he frequently indulged himself in pleasantry and sportive sallies. He was prone to superstition, but not to credulity. Though his imagination might incline him to a belief of the marvellous, and the mysterious, his vigorous reason examined the evidence with jealousy. He had a loud voice, and a slow deliberate utterance, which no doubt gave some additional weight to the sterling metal of his conversation. Lord Pembroke said once to me at Wilton, with a happy pleasantry, and some truth, that "Dr Johnson's sayings would not appear so extraordinary, were it not for his *bow-wow way*": but I admit the truth of this only on some occasions. The *Messiah*, played upon the *Canterbury organ*, is more sublime than when played upon an inferior instrument: but very slight musick* will seem grand, when conveyed to the ear through that majestick medium. *While therefore Doctor Johnson's sayings are read, let his manner be taken along with them.* Let it however be observed, that the sayings themselves are generally great; that, though

he might be an ordinary composer at times, he was for the most part a Handel.*—His person was large, robust, I may say approaching to the gigantick, and grown unwieldy from corpulency. His countenance was naturally of the cast of an ancient statue, but somewhat disfigured by the scars of that *evil*, which, it was formerly imagined, the *royal touch* could cure. He was now in his sixty-fourth year, and was become a little dull of hearing. His sight had always been somewhat weak; yet, so much does mind govern, and even supply the deficiency of organs, that his perceptions were uncommonly quick and accurate. His head, and sometimes also his body, shook with a kind of motion like the effect of a palsy: he appeared to be frequently disturbed by cramps, or convulsive contractions, of the nature of that distemper called *St Vitus's dance*. He wore a full suit of plain brown clothes, with twisted-hair-buttons of the same colour, a large bushy grayish wig, a plain shirt, black worsted stockings, and silver buckles. Upon this tour, when journeying, he wore boots, and a very wide brown cloth great coat, with pockets which might have almost held the two volumes of his folio *Dictionary*; and he carried in his hand a large English oak stick. Let me not be censured for mentioning such minute particulars. Everything relative to so great a man is worth observing. I remember Dr Adam Smith, in his rhetorical lectures at Glasgow, told us he was glad to know that Milton wore latches in his shoes, instead of buckles. When I mention the oak stick, it is but letting *Hercules* have his club; and, by-and-by, my readers will find this stick will bud, and produce a good joke.

This imperfect sketch of "the COMBINATION and the form" of that Wonderful Man, whom I venerated and loved while in this world, and after whom I gaze with humble hope, now that it has pleased ALMIGHTY GOD to call him to a better world, will serve to introduce to the fancy of my readers the capital object of the following Journal, in the course of which I trust they will attain to a considerable degree of acquaintance with him.

His prejudice against Scotland was announced almost as soon as he began to appear in the world of letters. In his *London*, a poem, are the following nervous lines:

"For who would leave, unbrib'd, Hibernia's land?
Or change the rocks of Scotland for the Strand?
There none are swept by sudden fate away;
But all, whom hunger spares, with age decay."

The truth is, like the ancient Greeks and Romans, he allowed himself to look upon all nations but his own as barbarians: not only Hibernia, and Scotland, but Spain, Italy, and France, are attacked in the same poem. If he was particularly prejudiced against the Scotch, it was because they were more in his way; because he thought their success in England rather exceeded the due proportion of their real merit; and because he could not but see in them that nationality which, I believe, no liberal-minded Scotchman will deny. He was indeed, if I may be allowed the phrase, at bottom much of a *John Bull*; much of a blunt *true born Englishman*. There was a stratum of common clay under the rock of marble. He was voraciously fond of good eating; and he had a great deal of that quality called *humour*, which gives an oiliness and a gloss to every other quality.

To Scotland however he ventured; and he returned from it in great good humour, with his prejudices much lessened, and with very grateful feelings of the hospitality with which he was treated; as is evident from that admirable work, his *Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland* which, to my utter astonishment, has been misapprehended even to rancour, by many of my countrymen.

To have the company of Chambers and Scott, he delayed his journey so long, that the court of session, which rises on the eleventh of August, was broke up* before he got to Edinburgh.

On Saturday the fourteenth of August, 1773, late in the evening, I received a note from him, that he was arrived at Boyd's inn, at the head of the Canongate. I went to him directly. He embraced me cordially; and I exulted in

the thought, that I now had him actually in Caledonia. Mr Scott's amiable manners, and attachment to our *Socrates*,* at once united me to him. He told me that, before I came in, the Doctor had unluckily had a bad specimen of Scotch cleanliness. He then drank no fermented liquor. He asked to have his lemonade made sweeter; upon which the waiter, with his greasy fingers, lifted a lump of sugar, and put it into it. The Doctor, in indignation, threw it out of the window. Scott said, he was afraid he would have knocked the waiter down. Mr Johnson told me, that such another trick was played him at the house of a lady in Paris. He was to do me the honour to lodge under my roof. I regretted sincerely that I had not also a room for Mr Scott. Mr Johnson and I walked arm-in-arm up the High-street, to my house in James's-court: it was a dusky night; I could not prevent his being assailed by the evening effluvia of Edinburgh. I heard a late baronet, of some distinction in the political world in the beginning of the present reign, observe, that "walking the streets of Edinburgh at night was pretty perilous, and a good deal odoriferous." The peril is much abated, by the care which the magistrates have taken to enforce the city laws against throwing foul water from the windows; but, from the structure of the houses in the old town, which consist of many stories, in each of which a different family lives, and there being no covered sewers, the odour still continues. A zealous Scotchman would have wished Mr Johnson to be without one of his five senses upon this occasion. But he acknowledged that the breadth of the street, and the loftiness of the buildings on each side, made a noble appearance.

My wife had tea ready for him, which it is well known he delighted to drink at all hours, particularly when sitting up late. He showed much complacency upon finding that the mistress of the house was so attentive to his singular habit; and as no man could be more polite when he chose to be so, his address to her was most courteous and engaging; and his conversation soon charmed her into a forgetfulness of his external appearance.

I did not begin to keep a regular full journal till some days after we had set out from Edinburgh; but I have luckily preserved a good many fragments of his *Memorabilia* from his very first evening in Scotland.

We sat till near two in the morning, having chatted a good while after my wife left us. She had insisted, that to shew all respect to the Sage, she would give up her own bed-chamber to him, and take a worse. This I cannot but gratefully mention, as one of a thousand obligations which I owe her, since the great obligation of her being pleased to accept of me as her husband.

Sunday, 15th August

Mr Scott came to breakfast, at which I introduced to Dr Johnson, and him, my friend Sir William Forbes, now of Pittsligo; a man of whom too much good cannot be said; who, with distinguished abilities and application in his profession of a Banker, is at once a good companion, and a good Christian; which I think is saying enough. Yet it is but justice to record, that once, when he was in a dangerous illness, he was watched with the anxious apprehension of a general calamity; day and night his house was beset with affectionate inquiries; and, upon his recovery, *Te Deum** was the universal chorus from the hearts of his countrymen.

Mr Johnson was pleased with my daughter Veronica,¹ then a child of about four months old. She had the appearance of listening to him. His motions seemed to her to be intended for her amusement; and when he stopped, she fluttered, and made a little infantine noise, and a kind of signal for him to begin again. She would

¹ The saint's name of *Veronica* was introduced into our family through my great-grandmother Veronica, Countess of Kincardine, a Dutch lady of the noble house of Sommeladyck, of which there is a full account in Bayle's *Dictionary*. The family had once a princely right in Surinam. My great-grandfather, the husband of Countess Veronica, was Alexander, Earl of Kincardine, that eminent *Royalist* whose character is given by Burnet in his *History of his own Times*. From him the blood of Bruce flows in my veins. Of such encentry who would not be proud? And, as *Nihil est, nisi hoc nrat alter*,* is peculiarly true of genealogy, who would not be glad to seize a fair opportunity to let it be known?

be held close to him; which was a proof, from simple nature, that his figure was not horrid. Her fondness for him endeared her still more to me, and I declared she should have five hundred pounds of additional fortune.

We talked of the practice of the law. Sir William Forbes said, he thought an honest lawyer should never undertake a cause which he was satisfied was not a just one. Sir (said Mr Johnson), a lawyer has no business with the justice or the injustice of the cause which he undertakes, unless his client asks his opinion, and then he is bound to give it honestly. The justice or injustice of the cause is to be decided by the judge. Consider, sir; what is the purpose of courts of justice? It is, that every man may have his cause fairly tried, by men appointed to try causes. A lawyer is not to tell what he knows to be a lie: he is not to produce what he knows to be a false deed; but he is not to usurp the province of the jury and of the judge, and determine what shall be the effect of evidence,—what shall be the result of legal argument. As it rarely happens that a man is fit to plead his own cause, lawyers are a class of the community, who, by study and experience, have acquired the art and power of arranging evidence, and of applying to the points at issue what the law has settled. A lawyer is to do for his client all that his client might fairly do for himself, if he could. If, by a superiority of attention, of knowledge, of skill, and a better method of communication, he has the advantage of his adversary, it is an advantage to which he is entitled. There must always be some advantage, on one side or other; and it is better that advantage should be had by talents, than by chance. If lawyers were to undertake no causes till they were sure they were just, a man might be precluded altogether from a trial of his claim, though, were it judicially examined, it might be found a very just claim."—This was sound practical doctrine, and rationally repressed a too refined scrupulosity of conscience.

Emigration was at this time a common topick of discourse. Dr Johnson regretted it as hurtful to human

happiness: "For (said he) it spreads mankind, which weakens the defence of a nation, and lessens the comfort of living. Men, thinly scattered, make a shift, but a bad shift, without many things. A smith is ten miles off: they'll do without a nail or a staple. A taylor is far from them: they'll botch their own clothes. It is being concentrated which produces high convenience."

Sir William Forbes, Mr Scott, and I, accompanied Mr Johnson to the chapel, founded by Lord Chief Baron Smith, for the Service of the Church of England.

When we got home, Dr Johnson desired to see my books. He took down Ogden's *Sermons on Prayer*, on which I set a very high value, having been much edified by them, and he retired with them to his room. He did not stay long, but soon joined us in the drawing-room.

While we were talking, there came a note to me from Dr William Robertson.

"DEAR SIR,

"I have been expecting every day to hear from you, of Dr Johnson's arrival. Pray, what do you know about his motions? I long to take him by the hand. I write this from the college, where I have only this scrap of paper. Ever yours,

"W. R."

"Sunday."

It pleased me to find Dr Robertson thus eager to meet Dr Johnson. I was glad I could answer, that he was come: and I begged Dr Robertson might be with us as soon as he could.

Sir William Forbes, Mr Scott, Mr Arbutnot, and another gentleman dined with us. "Come, Dr Johnson (said I), it is commonly thought that our veal in Scotland is not good. But here is some which I believe you will like."—There was no catching him.—JOHNSON. "Why, sir, what is commonly thought, I should take to be true. *Your* veal may be good; but that will only be an exception to the general opinion; not a proof against it."

Dr Robertson, according to the custom of Edinburgh

at that time, dined in the interval between the forenoon and afternoon service, which was then later than now: so we had not the pleasure of his company till dinner was over, when he came and drank wine with us. And then began some animated dialogue, of which here follows a pretty full note.

We talked of Mr Burke.—Dr Johnson said, he had great variety of knowledge, store of imagery, copiousness of language.—ROBERTSON. "He has wit too."—JOHNSON. "No, sir; he never succeeds there. 'Tis low; 'tis conceit. I used to say, Burke never once made a good joke. What I most envy Burke for, is, his being constantly the same. He is never what we call hum-drum; never unwilling to begin to talk, nor in haste to leave off."—BOSWELL. "Yet he can listen."—JOHNSON. "No; I cannot say he is good at that. So desirous is he to talk, that, if one is speaking at this end of the table, he'll speak to somebody at the other end. Burke, sir, is such a man, that if you met him for the first time in the street where you were stopped by a drove of oxen, and you and he stepped aside to take shelter but for five minutes, he'd talk to you in such a manner, that, when you parted, you would say, this is an extraordinary man. Now, you may be long enough with me, without finding any thing extraordinary." He said, he believed Burke was intended for the law; but either had not money enough to follow it, or had not diligence enough. He said, he could not understand how a man could apply to one thing, and not to another. Robertson said, one man had more judgment, another more imagination.—JOHNSON. "No, sir; it is only, one man has more mind than another. He may direct it differently; he may, by accident, see the success of one kind of study, and take a desire to excel in it. I am persuaded that, had Sir Isaac Newton applied to poetry, he would have made a very fine epick poem. I could as easily apply to law as to tragick poetry."—BOSWELL. "Yet, sir, you did apply to tragick poetry, not to law."—JOHNSON. "Because, sir, I had not money to study law. Sir, the man who has vigour,

may walk to the east, just as well as to the west, if he happens to turn his head that way."—BOSWELL. "But, sir, 'tis like walking up and down a hill; one man will naturally do the one better than the other. A hare will run up a hill best, from her fore-legs being short; a dog down."—JOHNSON. "Nay, sir; that is from mechanical powers. If you make mind mechanical, you may argue in that manner. One mind is a vice, and 'holds fast; there's a good memory. Another is a file; and he is a disputant, a controversialist. Another is a razor; and he is sarcastical."

In the evening I introduced to Mr Johnson¹ two good friends of mine, Mr William Nairne, Advocate, and Mr Hamilton of Sundrum, my neighbour in the country, both of whom supped with us. I have preserved nothing of what passed, except that Dr Johnson displayed another of his heterodox opinions,—a contempt of tragick acting. He said, "the action of all players in tragedy is bad. It should be a man's study to repress those signs of emotion and passion, as they are called." He was of a directly contrary opinion to that of Fielding, in his *Tom Jones*; who makes Partridge say, of Garrick, "why, I could act as well as he myself. I am sure, if I had seen a ghost, I should have looked in the very same manner, and done just as he did." For, when I asked him, "Would not you, sir, start as Mr Garrick does, if you saw a ghost?" He answered, "I hope not. If I did, I should frighten the ghost."

Monday, 16th August

We walked out, that Dr Johnson might see some of the things which we have to show at Edinburgh. We went to the Parliament-House, where the Parliament of Scotland sat, and where the *Ordinary Lords* of Session hold their

¹ It may be observed, that I sometimes call my great friend Mr Johnson, sometimes Dr Johnson; though he had at this time a doctor's degree from Trinity College, Dublin. The University of Oxford afterwards conferred it upon him by a diploma, in very honourable terms. It was some time before I could bring myself to call him Doctor; but, as he has been long known by that title, I shall give it to him in the rest of this Journal.

courts; and to the New Session-House adjoining to it, where our Court of Fifteen (the fourteen *Ordinaries*, with the Lord President at their head) sit as a court of Review. We went to the Advocates' Library, of which Dr Johnson took a cursory view, and then to what is called the *Laigh* (or under) Parliament-House, where the records of Scotland, which has an universal security by register, are deposited, till the great Register Office be finished. I was pleased to behold Dr Samuel Johnson rolling about in this old magazine of antiquities. There was, by this time, a pretty numerous circle of us attending upon him. Somebody talked of happy moments for composition; and how a man can write at one time and not at another.—“Nay (said Dr Johnson), a man may write at any time, if he will set himself *doggedly* to it.”

We next went to the great church of St Giles, which has lost its original magnificence in the inside, by being divided into four places of Presbyterian worship. “Come (said Dr Johnson jocularly to Principal Robertson), let me see what was once a church!” We entered that division which was formerly called the *New Church*, and of late the *High Church*, so well known by the eloquence of Dr Hugh Blair. It is now very elegantly fitted up, but it was then shamefully dirty. Dr Johnson said nothing at the time; but when we came to the great door of the Royal Infirmary, where, upon a board, was this inscription, “*Clean your feet!*” he turned about slyly, and said, “There is no occasion for putting this at the doors of your churches!”

We then conducted him down the Post-house stairs, Parliament-close, and made him look up from the Cowgate to the highest building in Edinburgh (from which he had just descended), being thirteen floors or stories from the ground upon the back elevation; the front wall being built upon the edge of the hill, and the back wall rising from the bottom of the hill several stories before it comes to a level with the front wall. We proceeded to the College, with the Principal at our head.

I pointed out to him where there formerly stood an old

wall enclosing part of the College, which I remember bulged out in a threatening manner, and of which there was a common tradition similar to that concerning Bacon's study at Oxford, that it would fall upon some very learned man. It had some time before this been taken down, that the street might be widened, and a more convenient wall built. Dr Johnson, glad of an opportunity to have a pleasant hit at Scotch learning, said, "they have been afraid it never would fall."

We shewed him the Royal Infirmary, for which, and for every other exertion of generous publick spirit in his power, that noble-minded citizen of Edinburgh, George Drummond, will be ever held in honourable remembrance. And we were too proud not to carry him to the Abbey of Holyrood-house, that beautiful piece of architecture, but, alas! that deserted mansion of royalty, which Hamilton of Bangour, in one of his elegant poems, calls

"A virtuous palace, where no monarch dwells."

I was much entertained while Principal Robertson fluently harangued to Dr Johnson, upon the spot, concerning scenes of his celebrated *History of Scotland*. We surveyed that part of the palace appropriated to the Duke of Hamilton, as Keeper, in which our beautiful Queen Mary lived, and in which David Rizzio was murdered; and also the State Rooms. Dr Johnson was a great reciter of all sorts of things serious or comical. I overheard him repeating here, in a kind of muttering tone, a line of the old ballad, *Johnny Armstrong's Last Good-night*:

"And ran him through the fair body!"¹

We gave him as good a dinner as we could. Our Scotch muir-fowl, or growse, were then abundant, and

¹ The stanza from which he took this line is,

"But then rose up all Edinburgh,
They rose up by thousands three;
A cowardly Scot came John behind,
And ran him through the fair body!"

quite in season; and, so far ~~as~~ wisdom and wit can be aided by administering agreeable sensations to the palate, my wife took care that our great guest should not be deficient.

Tuesday, 17th August

Sir William Forbes came to breakfast, and brought with him Dr Blacklock, whom he introduced to Dr Johnson, who received him with a most humane complacency; "Dear Dr Blacklock, I am glad to see you!" —Blacklock seemed to be much surprised, when Dr Johnson said, "it was easier to him to write poetry than to compose his *Dictionary*. His mind was less on the stretch in doing the one than the other. Besides, composing a dictionary requires books and a desk; you can make a poem walking in the fields, or lying in bed."

At dinner this day, we had Sir Alexander Dick, whose amiable character, and ingenious and cultivated mind, are so generally known (he was then on the verge of seventy, and is now (1785) eighty-one, with his faculties entire, his heart warm, and his temper gay); Sir David Dalrymple Lord Hailes; Mr Maclaurin, advocate; Dr Gregory, who now worthily fills his father's medical chair; and my uncle, Dr Boswell. This was one of Dr Johnson's best days. He was quite in his element. All was literature and taste, without any interruption.

When Dr Johnson and I were left by ourselves, I read to him my notes of the Opinions of our Judges upon the questions of Literary Property. He did not like them; and said, "they make me think of your Judges not with that respect which I should wish to do." To the argument of one of them, that there can be no property in blasphemy or nonsense, he answered, "then your rotten sheep are mine!—By that rule, when a man's house falls into decay, he must lose it."—I mentioned an argument of mine, that literary performances are not taxed.—As Churchill says,

"No statesman yet has thought it worth his pains
To tax our labours, or excise our brains";

and therefore they are not property.—" Yet (said he), we hang a man for stealing a horse, and horses are not taxed."—Mr Pitt has since put an end to that argument.

Wednesday, 18th August

On this day we set out from Edinburgh. We should gladly have had Mr Scott to go with us; but he was obliged to return to England.—I have given a sketch of Dr Johnson: my readers may wish to know a little of his fellow-traveller. Think then, of a gentleman of ancient blood, the pride of which was his predominant passion. He was then in his thirty-third year, and had been about four years happily married. His inclination was to be a soldier; but his father, a respectable Judge, had pressed him into the profession of the law. He had travelled a good deal, and seen many varieties of human life. He had thought more than anybody supposed, and had a pretty good stock of general learning and knowledge. He had all Dr Johnson's principles, with some degree of relaxation. He had rather too little, than too much prudence; and, his imagination being lively, he often said things of which the effect was very different from the intention. He resembled sometimes

"The best good man, with the worst natur'd muse."

He cannot deny himself the vanity of finishing with the encomium of Dr Johnson, whose friendly partiality to the companion of his Tour represents him as one, "whose acuteness would help my inquiry, and whose gaiety of conversation, and civility of manners, are sufficient to counteract the inconveniences of travel, in countries less hospitable than we have passed."

Dr Johnson thought it unnecessary to put himself to the additional expense of bringing with him Francis Barber, his faithful black servant; so we were attended only by my man, Joseph Ritter, a Bohemian; a fine stately fellow above six feet high, who had been over a great part of Europe, and spoke many languages. He was the best servant I ever saw. Let not my

readers disdain his introduction. For Dr Johnson gave him this character: "Sir, he is a civil man, and a wise man."

From an erroneous apprehension of violence, Dr Johnson had provided a pair of pistols, some gunpowder, and a quantity of bullets: but upon being assured we should run no risk of meeting any robbers, he left his arms and ammunition in an open drawer, of which he gave my wife the charge. He also left in that drawer one volume of a pretty full and curious Diary of his Life, of which I have a few fragments; but the book had been destroyed. I wish female curiosity had been strong enough to have had it all transcribed, which might easily have been done; and I should think the theft, being *pro bono publico*, might have been forgiven. But I may be wrong. My wife told me she never once looked into it.—She did not seem quite easy when we left her: but away we went!

Mr Nairne, advocate, was to go with us as far as St Andrews. It gives me pleasure that, by mentioning his name, I connect his title to the just and handsome compliment paid him by Dr Johnson, in his book: "A gentleman who could stay with us only long enough to make us know how much we lost by his leaving us." When we came to Leith, I talked with perhaps too boasting an air, how pretty the Frith of Forth looked; as indeed, after the prospect from Constantinople, of which I have been told, and that from Naples, which I have seen, I believe the view of that Frith and its environs, from the Castle-hill of Edinburgh, is the finest prospect in Europe. "Ay," (said Dr Johnson), that is the state of the world. Water is the same every where.

"Una est injusti cœrula forma maris."¹

I told him the port here was the mouth of the river or water of Leith. "Not *Lethe*,"* said Mr Nairne.—"Why,

¹ "Non illic urbes, non tu mirabere silvas:

Una est injusti cœrula forma maris."

OVID, *Amor.* L. II. El. xi.

"Nor groves nor towns the ruthless ocean shows;
Unvaried still its azure surface flows."

sir (said Dr Johnson), when a Scotchman sets out from this port for England, he forgets his native country,"—NAIRNE. "I hope, sir, you will forget England here."—JOHNSON. "Then 'twill be still more *Lethe*."—He observed of the Pier or Quay, "you have no occasion for so large a one: your trade does not require it: but you are like a shopkeeper who takes a shop, not only for what he has to put into it, but that it may be believed he has a great deal to put into it." It is very true, that there is now, comparatively, little trade upon the eastern coast of Scotland. The riches of Glasgow shew how much there is in the west; and perhaps we shall find trade travel westward on a great scale, as well as a small.

He then said, "I see a number of people barefooted here: I suppose you all went so before the Union. Boswell, your ancestors went so, when they had as much land as your family has now. Yet Auchinleck is the Field of Stones: there would be bad going barefooted there. The Lairds, however, did it."—I bought some *speldings*, fish (generally whittings) salted and dried in a particular manner, being dipped in the sea and dried in the sun, and eaten by the Scotch by way of a relish. He had never seen them, though they are sold in London. I insisted on *scottifying* his palate; but he was very reluctant. With difficulty I prevailed with him to let a bit of one of them lie in his mouth. He did not like it.

In crossing the Frith, Dr Johnson determined that we should land upon Inch Keith. On approaching it, we first observed a high rocky shore. We coasted about, and put into a little bay on the north-west. We clambered up a very steep ascent, on which was very good grass, but rather a profusion of thistles. There were sixteen head of black cattle grazing upon the island. Lord Hailes observed to me, that Brantome* calls it *L'isle des Chevaux*, and that it was probably "a *safes* stable" than many others in his time. The fort, with an inscription on it, *Maria Re** 1564, is strongly built. Dr Johnson examined

it with much attention. He stanked like a giant among the luxuriant thistles and nettles. There are three wells in the island; but we could not find one in the fort. There must probably have been one, though now filled up, as a garrison could not subsist without it. But I have dwelt too long on this little spot. Dr Johnson afterwards bade me try to write a description of our discovering Inch Keith, in the usual style of travellers, describing fully every particular; stating the grounds on which we concluded that it must have once been inhabited, and introducing many sage reflections; and we should see how a thing might be covered in words, so as to induce people to come and survey it. All that was told might be true, and yet in reality there might be nothing to see. He said, "I'd have this island. I'd build a house, make a good landing-place, have a garden, and vines, and all sorts of trees. A rich man, of a hospitable turn, here, would have many visitors from Edinburgh." When we had got into our boat again, he called to me, "Come, now, pay a classical compliment to the island on quitting it." I happened luckily, in allusion to the beautiful Queen Mary, whose name is upon the fort, to think of what Virgil makes *Aeneas** say, on having left the country of his charming *Dido**:

"*Invitus, regina, tuo de littore cessi.*"¹

"Very well bit off!" said he.

We dined at Kinghorn, and then got into a post-chaise. Mr Nairne and his servant, and Joseph, rode by us. We stopped at Cupar, and drank tea. We talked of parliament; and I said, I supposed very few of the members knew much of what was going on, as indeed very few gentlemen know much of their own private affairs.—JOHNSON. "Why, sir, if a man is not of a sluggish mind, he may be his own steward. If he will look into his affairs, he will soon learn. So it is as to publick affairs.

¹ "Unhappy queen!

Unwilling I forsook your friendly state."

DRYDEN.

There must always be a certain number of men of business in parliament."

We had a dreary drive, in a dusky night, to St Andrews, where we arrived late. We found a good supper at Glass's inn, and Dr Johnson revived agreeably. After supper, we made a *procession* to Saint Leonard's College, the landlord walking before us with a candle, and the waiter with a lantern. That college had some time before been dissolved; and Dr Watson, a professor here (the historian of Philip II.), had purchased the ground, and what buildings remained. When we entered his court, it seemed quite academical; and we found in his house very comfortable and genteel accommodation.¹

Thursday, 19th August

We rose much refreshed. I had with me a map of Scotland, a Bible, which was given me by Lord Mountstuart when we were together in Italy, and Ogden's *Sermons on Prayer*. Mr Nairne introduced us to Dr Watson, whom we found a well-informed man, of very amiable manners. Dr Johnson, after they were acquainted, said, "I take great delight in him."—His daughter, a very pleasing young lady, made breakfast.

It was a very fine day. Dr Johnson seemed quite wrapt up in the contemplation of the scenes which were now presented to him. He kept his hat off while he was upon any part of the ground where the cathedral had stood. He said well, that "Knox had set on a mob, without knowing where it would end; and that differing from a man in doctrine was no reason why you should pull his house about his ears." As we walked in the cloisters, there was a solemn echo, while he talked loudly of a proper retirement from the world.

He wanted to mount the steeples, but it could not be done. There are no good inscriptions here. Bad Roman characters he naturally mistook for half Gothick, half Roman. One of the steeples, which he was told was in danger, he wished not to be taken down; "for (said he)

¹ My JOURNAL from this day inclusive was read by Dr Johnson.

it may fall on some of the posterity of John Knox; and no great matter!"—Dinner was mentioned.—JOHNSON. "Ay, ay; amidst all these sorrowful scenes, I have no objection to dinner."

We went and looked at the castle, where Cardinal Beaton was murdered, and then visited Principal Murison at his college, where is a good library-room; but the principal was abundantly vain of it, for he seriously said to Dr Johnson, "you have not such a one in England."

We went and saw the church, in which is Archhishop Sharp's monument. I was struck with the same kind of feelings with which the churches of Italy impressed me. I was much pleased, to see Dr Johnson actually in St Andrews, of which we had talked so long.

It was somewhat dispiriting, to see this ancient archiepiscopal city now sadly deserted. We saw in one of its streets a remarkable proof of liberal toleration; a non-juring clergyman, strutting about in his canonicals, with a jolly countenance and a round belly, like a well-fed monk.

We observed two occupations united in the same person, who had hung out two sign-posts. Upon one was, "James Hood, White Iron Smith" (*i.e.* Tinsmith Worker). Upon another, "The Art of Fencing taught, by James Hood."—Upon this last were painted some trees, and two men fencing, one of whom had hit the other in the eye to show his great dexterity; so that the art was well taught.—JOHNSON. "Were I studying here, I should go and take a lesson. I remember Hope, in his book on this art, says, 'the Scotch are very good fencers.'"

We returned to the inn, where we had been entertained at dinner, and drank tea in company with some of the Professors, of whose civilities I beg leave to add my humble and very grateful acknowledgement to the honourable testimony of Dr Johnson, in his *Journey*.

We all went to Dr Watson's to supper. Miss Sharp, great-grandchild of Archbishop Sharp, was there; as was Mr Craig, the ingenious architect of the new town of

Edinburgh, and nephew of Thomson,* to whom Dr Johnson has since done so much justice, in his *Lives of the Poets*.

We talked of memory and its various modes.—JOHNSON. "Memory will play strange tricks. One sometimes loses a single word. I once lost *fugaces* in the Ode *Posthume, Posthume*."* I mentioned to him, that a worthy gentleman of my acquaintance actually forgot his own name.—JOHNSON. "Sir, that was a morbid oblivion."

Friday, 20th August

We went and saw Colonel Nairne's garden and grotto. Here was a fine old plane-tree. Unluckily the colonel said, there was but this and another large tree in the county. This assertion was an excellent cue for Dr Johnson, who laughed enormously, calling to me to hear it. He had expatiated to me on the nakedness of that part of Scotland which he had seen. His *Journey* has been violently abused, for what he has said upon this subject. But let it be considered, that, when Dr Johnson talks of trees, he means trees of good size, such as he was accustomed to see in England; and of these there are certainly very few upon the *eastern coast* of Scotland. Besides, he said, that he meant to give only a map of the road; and let any traveller observe how many trees, which deserve the name, he can see from the road from Berwick to Aberdeen. Had Dr Johnson said, "there are *no* trees" upon this line, he would have said what is colloquially true; because, by no trees, in common speech, we mean few. When he is particular in counting, he may be attacked. I know not how Colonel Nairne came to say there were but *two* large trees in the county of Fife. I did not perceive that he smiled. There are certainly not a great many; but I could have shewn him more than two at Balmuto, from whence my ancestors came, and which now belongs to a branch of my family.

The grotto was ingeniously constructed. In the front of it were petrified stocks of fir, plane, and some other

tree. Dr Johnson said, "Scotland has no right to boast of this grotto; it is owing to personal merit. I never denied personal merit to many of you."—Professor Shaw said to me, as we walked, "This is a wonderful man: he is master of every subject he handles."

We left St Andrews about noon, and some miles from it observing, at Leuchars, a church with an old tower, we stopped to look at it. The *manse*, as the parsonage-house is called in Scotland, was close by. I waited on* the minister, mentioned our names, and begged he would tell us what he knew about it. He was a very civil old man; but could only inform us, that it was supposed to have stood eight hundred years.

We saw, this day, Dundee and Aberbrothick,* the last of which Dr Johnson has celebrated in his *Journey*.

Dr Johnson put me in mind, that, at St Andrews, I had defended my profession very well, when the question had again been started, Whether a lawyer might honestly engage with the first side that offers him a fee. "Sir (said I), it was with your arguments against Sir William Forbes: but it was much that I could wield the arms of Goliath."

He said, our judges had not gone deep in the question concerning literary property. I mentioned Lord Monboddo's opinion, that if a man could get a work by heart, he might print it, as by such an act the mind is exercised.—JOHNSON. "No, sir; a man's repeating it no more makes it his property, than a man may sell a cow which he drives home."—I said, printing an abridgement of a work was allowed, which was only cutting the horns and tail off the cow.—JOHNSON. "No, sir; 'tis making the cow have a calf."

About eleven at night we arrived at Montrose. We found but a sorry inn, where I myself saw another waiter put a lump of sugar with his fingers into Dr Johnson's lemonade, for which he called him "Rascal!" It put me in great glee that our landlord was an Englishman. I rallied the Doctor upon this, and he grew quiet.

He was angry at me for proposing to carry lemons with

us to Sky, that he might be sure to have his lemonade. "Sir (said he), I do not wish to be thought that feeble man who cannot do without any thing. Sir, it is very bad manners to carry provisions to any man's house, as if he could not entertain you. To an inferior, it is oppressive; to a superior, it is insolent."

Having taken the liberty, this evening, to remark to Dr Johnson, that he very often sat quite silent for a long time, even when in company with only a single friend, which I myself had sometimes sadly experienced, he smiled and said, "It is true, sir. Tom Tyers (for so he familiarly called our ingenious friend, who, since his death, has paid a biographical tribute to his memory), Tom Tyers described me the best. He once said to me, 'Sir, you are like a ghost: you never speak till you are spoken to.'"

Saturday, 21st August

Before breakfast, we went and saw the town-hall, where is a good dancing-room, and other rooms for tea-drinking. The appearance of the town from it is very well; but many of the houses are built with their ends to the street, which looks awkward. When we came down from it, I met Mr Gleg, a merchant here. He went with us to see the English chapel. It is situated on a pretty dry spot, and there is a fine walk to it. It is really an elegant building, both within and without. The organ is adorned with green and gold. Dr Johnson gave a shilling extraordinary to the clerk, saying, "He belongs to an honest church." I put him in mind, that episcopals were but *dissenters* here; they were only *tolerated*. "Sir (said he), we are here, as *Christians in Turkey*."—He afterwards went into an apothecary's shop, and ordered some medicine for himself, and wrote the prescription in technical characters. The boy took him for a physician.

I doubted much which road to take, whether to go by the coast or by Laurence Kirk and Monboddo. I knew Lord Monboddo and Dr Johnson did not love each other: yet I was unwilling not to visit his lordship; and was also

curious to see them together.¹ I mentioned my doubts to Dr Johnson, who said, he would go two miles out of his way to see Lord Monboddo. I therefore sent Joseph, forward, with the following note:

"MONTROSE, 21 August.

"MY DEAR LORD,

"Thus far I am come with Mr Samuel Johnson. We must be at Aberdeen to-night. I know you do not admire him so much as I do; but I cannot be in this country without making you a bow at your old place, as I do not know if I may again have an opportunity of seeing Monboddo. Besides, Mr Johnson says, he would go two miles out of his way to see Lord Monboddo. I have sent forward my servant, that we may know if your lordship be at home. I am ever, my dear lord,

"Most sincerely yours,

"JAMES BOSWELL."

As we travelled onwards from Montrose, we had the Grampion hills in our view, and some good land around us, but void of trees and hedges. Dr Johnson has said ludicrously, in his *Journey*, that the *hedges* were of *stone*; for, instead of the verdant *thorn* to refresh the eye, we found the bare *wall* or *dike* intersecting the Prospect. He observed, that it was wonderful to see a country so divested, so denuded of trees.

We stopped at Laurence Kirk, where our great Grammarian, Ruddiman, was once schoolmaster. We respectfully remembered that excellent man and eminent scholar, by whose labours a knowledge of the Latin language will be preserved in Scotland, if it shall be preserved at all.

I was a little acquainted with Mr Forbes, the minister of the parish. I sent to inform him that a gentleman

¹ There were several points of similarity between them, learning, clearness of head, precision of speech, and a love of research on many subjects which people in general do not investigate. Foote paid Lord Monboddo the compliment of saying, that he was "an Elzevir edition of Johnson."

It has been shrewdly observed that Foote must have meant a diminutive, or *pocket* edition.

desired to see him. He returned for answer, "that he would not come to a stranger." I then gave my name, and he came. I remonstrated to him for not coming to a stranger; and, by presenting him to Dr Johnson, proved to him what a stranger might sometimes be. His Bible inculcates "be not forgetful to entertain strangers," and mentions the same motive. He defended himself by saying, "He had once come to a stranger who sent for him; and he found him '*a little worth person*'!"

About a mile from Monboddo, where you turn off the road, Joseph was waiting to tell us my lord expected us to dinner. We drove over a wild moor. It rained, and the scene was somewhat dreary. Dr Johnson repeated, with solemn emphasis, Macbeth's speech on meeting the witches. As we travelled on, he told me, "Sir, you got into our club by doing what a man can do.¹ Several of the members wished to keep you out. Burke told me, he doubted if you were fit for it: but, now you are in, none of them are sorry. Burke says, that you have so much good humour naturally, it is scarce a virtue."—BOSWELL. "They were afraid of you, sir, as it was you who proposed me."—JOHNSON. "Sir, they knew, that if they refused you, they'd probably never have got in another. I'd have kept them all out. Beauclerk was very earnest for you."—BOSWELL. "Beauclerk has a keenness of mind which is very uncommon."—JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; and every thing comes from him so easily. It appears to me that I labour, when I say a good thing."—BOSWELL. "You are loud, sir; but it is not an effort of mind."

Monboddo is a wretched place, wild and naked, with a poor old house; though, if I recollect right, there are two turrets which mark an old haron's residence. Lord Monboddo received us at his gate most courteously; pointed to the Douglas arms upon his house, and told us that his great-grandmother was of that family. "In such houses (said he) our ancestors lived, who were better men

¹ This, I find, is considered as obscene. I suppose Dr Johnson meant, that I assiduously and earnestly recommended myself to some of the members, as in a canvass for an election into parliament.

than we."—"No, no, my lord (said Dr Johnson). We are as strong as they, and a great deal wiser."—This was an assault upon one of Lord Monboddo's capital dogmas,* and I was afraid there would have been a violent altercation in the very close, before we got into the house. But his lordship is distinguished not only for "ancient metaphysicks," but for ancient *politesse*, "*la vieille cour*,"* and he made no reply.

His lordship was drest in a rustick suit, and wore a little round hat; he told us, we now saw him as *Farmer Burnet*, and we should have his family dinner, a farmer's dinner. He said, "I should not have forgiven Mr Boswell, had he not brought you here, Dr Johnson." He produced a very long stalk of corn, as a specimen of his crop, and said, "You see here the *latas segetes*":* he added, that Virgil seemed to be as enthusiastick a farmer as he, and was certainly a practical one.—JOHNSON. "It does not always follow, my lord, that a man who has written a good poem on an art has practised it. Philip Miller told me, that in Philips's *Cyder*, a poem, all the precepts were just, and indeed better than in books written for the purpose of instructing; yet Philips had never made cyder."—MONBODDO. "I am sorry, Dr Johnson, you were not longer at Edinburgh, to receive the homage of our men of learning."—JOHNSON. "My lord, I received great respect and great kindness."—BOSWELL. "He goes back to Edinburgh after our tour."—We talked of the decrease of learning in Scotland, and of the *Muses' Welcome*.—JOHNSON. "Learning is much decreased in England, in my remembrance."—MONBODDO. "You, sir, have lived to see its decrease in England, I its extinction in Scotland." However, I brought him to confess that the High School of Edinburgh did well.

Dr Johnson examined young Arthur, Lord Monboddo's son, in Latin. He answered very well; upon which he said, with complacency, "Get you gone! When King James comes back, you shall be in the *Muses' Welcome*!"—My lord and Dr Johnson disputed a little, whether the Savage or the London Shopkeeper had the best existence; his lordship, as usual, preferring the Savage.—My lord

was extremely hospitable, and I saw both Dr Johnson and him liking each other better every hour.

I had a particular satisfaction in being under the roof of Monboddo, my lord being my father's old friend, and having been always very good to me. We were cordial together. He asked Dr Johnson and me to stay all night. When I said we *must* be at Aberdeen, he replied, "Well, I am like the Romans: I shall say to you, 'Happy to come;—happy to depart!'" He thanked Dr Johnson for his visit.—JOHNSON. "I little thought, when I had the honour to meet your lordship in London, that I should see you at Monboddo." After dinner, as the ladies were going away, Dr Johnson would stand up. He insisted that politeness was of great consequence in society.

Gory, my lord's black servant, was sent as our guide, to conduct us to the high road. The circumstance of each of them having a black servant was another point of similarity between Johnson and Monboddo. I observed how curious it was to see an African in the north of Scotland, with little or no difference of manners from those of the natives. Dr Johnson laughed to see Gory and Joseph riding together most cordially. "Those two fellows (said he), one from Africa, the other from Bohemia, seem quite at home."—He was much pleased with Lord Monboddo to-day. He said, he would have pardoned him for a few paradoxes, when he found he had so much that was good: but that, from his appearance in London, he thought him all paradox; which would not do. He observed, that his lordship had talked no paradoxes to-day. "And as to the savage and the London shopkeeper (said he), I don't know but I might have taken the side of the savage equally, had any body else taken the side of the shopkeeper."—He had said to my lord, in opposition to the value of the savage's courage, that it was owing to his limited power of thinking, and repeated Pope's verses, in which "Macedonia's madman" is introduced, and the conclusion is,

"Yet ne'er looks forward farther than his nose."

I objected to the last phrase, as being low.—JOHNSON. "Sir, it is intended to be low: it is satire. The expression is debased, to debase the character."

When Gory was about to part from us, Dr Johnson called to him, "Mr Gory, give me leave to ask you a question: are you baptized?" Gory told him he was,—and confirmed by the Bishop of Durham. He then gave him a shilling.

We had tedious driving this afternoon, and were somewhat drowsy. Last night I was afraid Dr Johnson was beginning to faint in his resolution; for he said, "If we must ride much, we shall not go; and there's an end on't."—To-day, when he talked of Sky with spirit, I said, "Why, sir, you seemed to me to despond yesterday. You are a delicate Londoner;—you are a maccaroni*; you can't ride."—JOHNSON. "Sir, I shall ride better than you, I was only afraid I should not find a horse able to carry me."—I hoped then there would be no fear of getting through our wild Tour.

We came to Aberdeen at half an hour past eleven. The New Inn, we were told, was full. This was comfortless. The waiter, however, asked if one of our names was Boswell, and brought me a letter left at the inn: it was from Mr Thrale, enclosing one to Dr Johnson. Finding who I was, we were told they would contrive to lodge us by putting us for a night into a room with two beds. The waiter said to me in the broad strong Aberdeenshire dialect, "I thought I knew you, by your likeness to your father."—My father puts up at the New Inn when on his circuit. Little was said to-night. I was to sleep in a little press-bed in Dr Johnson's room. I had it wheeled out into the dining-room, and there I lay very well.

Sunday, 22nd August

I sent a message to Professor Thomas Gordon, who came and breakfasted with us. He had secured seats for us at the English chapel. We found a respectable congregation, and an admirable organ, well played by Mr Tait.

We walked down to the shore. Dr Johnson laughed to hear that Cromwell's soldiers taught the Aberdeen people to make shoes and stockings, and to plant cabbages. He asked, if weaving the plaids was ever a domestick art in the Highlands, like spinning or knitting. They could not inform him here. But he conjectured probably, that where people lived so remote from each other, it was likely to be a domestick art; as we see it was among the ancients, from Penelope.*—I was sensible to-day, to an extraordinary degree, of Dr Johnson's excellent English pronunciation. I cannot account for its striking me more now than any other day; but it was as if new to me; and I listened to every sentence which he spoke, as to a musical composition.—Professor Gordon gave him an account of the plan of education in his college. Dr Johnson said, it was similar to that at Oxford.—Waller* the poet's great-grandson was studying here. Dr Johnson wondered that a man should send his son so far off, when there were so many good schools in England. He said, "At a great school there is all the splendour and illumination of many minds; the radiance of all is concentrated in each, or at least reflected upon each. But we must own that neither a dull boy, nor an idle boy, will do so well at a great school as at a private one. For at a great school there are always boys enough to do well easily, who are sufficient to keep up the credit of the school; and after whipping being tried to no purpose, the dull or idle boys are left at the end of a class, having the appearance of going through the course, but learning nothing at all. Such boys may do good at a private school, where constant attention is paid to them, and they are watched. So that the question of publick or private education is not properly a general one; but whether one or the other is best for *my son*."

We were told the present Mr Waller was a plain country gentleman; and his son would be such another.

At dinner, Dr Johnson ate several plate-fulls of Scotch broth, with barley and peas in it, and seemed very fond of the dish. I said, "You never ate it before."—JOHNSON.

"No, sir; but I don't care how soon I eat it again."—My cousin, Miss Dallas, formerly of Inverness, was married to Mr Riddoch, one of the ministers of the English chapel here. He was ill, and confined to his room; but she sent us a kind invitation to tea, which we all accepted. She was the same lively, sensible, cheerful woman, as ever. Dr Johnson here threw out some jokes against Scotland. He said, "You go first to Aberdeen; then to Enbru (the Scotch pronunciation of Edinburgh); then to Newcastle, to be polished by the colliers; then to York; then to London." And he laid hold of a little girl, Stuart Dallas, niece to Mrs Riddoch, and, representing himself as a giant, said, he would take her with him! telling her, in a hollow voice, that he lived in a cave, and had a bed in the rock, and she should have a little bed cut opposite to it!

We went to our inn and sat quietly.

Monday, 23rd August

Principal Campbell, Sir Alexander Gordon, Professor Gordon, and Professor Ross, visited us in the morning, as did Dr Gerard, who had come six miles from the country on purpose. We went and saw the Marischal College, and at one o'clock we waited on the magistrates in the town-hall, as they had invited us in order to present Dr Johnson with the freedom of the town, which Provost Jopp did with a very good grace. Dr Johnson was much pleased with this mark of attention, and received it very politely. There was a pretty numerous company assembled. It was striking to hear all of them drinking "Dr Johnson! Dr Johnson!" in the town-hall of Aberdeen, and then to see him with his burgess-ticket, or diploma, in his hat, which he wore as he walked along the street, according to the usual custom.—It gave me great satisfaction to observe the regard, and indeed fondness too, which everybody here had for my father.

While Sir Alexander Gordon conducted Dr Johnson to old Aberdeen, Professor Gordon and I called on Mr Riddoch, whom I found to be a grave worthy clergy-

man. He observed, that, whatever might be said of Dr Johnson while he was alive, he would, after he was dead, be looked upon by the world with regard and astonishment, on account of his *Dictionary*.

Tuesday, 24th August

We set out about eight in the morning, and breakfasted at Ellon. The landlady said to me, "Is not this the great Doctor that is going about through the country?"—I said, "Yes."—"Ay (said she), we heard of him, I made an errand into the room on purpose to see him. There's something great in his appearance: it is a pleasure to have such a man in one's house; a man who does so much good. If I had thought of it, I would have shewn him a child of mine, who has had a lump on his throat for some time."—"But (said I) he is not a doctor of physick."—"Is he an oculist?" said the landlord—"No (said I), he is only a very learned man."—LANDLORD, "They say he is the greatest man in England, except Lord Mansfield."*—Dr Johnson was highly entertained with this, and I do think he was pleased too. He said, "I like the exception: to have called me the greatest man in England, would have been an unmeaning compliment: but the exception marked that the praise was in earnest; and, in Scotland, the exception must be Lord Mansfield, or—Sir John Pringle."

He told me a good story of Dr Goldsmith. Graham, who wrote *Teleniachus, a Masque*, was sitting one night with him and Dr Johnson, and was half drunk. He rattled away to Dr Johnson: "You are a clever fellow, to be sure; but you cannot write an essay like Addison, or verses like *The Rape of the Lock*." At last he said, "Doctor, I should be happy to see you at Eaton."—"I shall be glad to wait on you," answered Goldsmith.—"No (said Graham), 'tis not you I mean, Dr Minor; 'tis Dr Major, there."—Goldsmith was excessively hurt by this. He afterwards spoke of it himself. "Graham (said he) is a fellow to make one commit suicide."

We had received a polite invitation to Slains castle.

We arrived there just at three o'clock, as the bell for dinner was ringing. Though, from its being just on the North-east Ocean, no trees will grow here, Lord Errol has done all that can be done. He has cultivated his fields so as to bear rich crops of every kind, and he has made an excellent kitchen-garden, with a hot-house. I had never seen any of the family: but there had been a card of invitation written by the honourable Charles Boyd, the earl's brother. We were conducted into the bouse, and at the dining-room door were met by that gentleman, whom both of us at first took to be Lord Errol; but he soon corrected our mistake. My lord was gone to dine in the neighbourhood, at an entertainment given by Mr Irvine of Drum. Lady Errol received us politely, and was very attentive to us during the time of dinner. There was nobody at table but her ladyship, Mr Boyd, and some of the children, their governour and governess. After dinner, Lady Errol favoured us with a sight of her young family, whom she made stand up in a row. There were six daughters and two sons. It was a very pleasing sight. ♡

Dr Johnson proposed our setting out. Mr Boyd said, he hoped we would stay all night; his brother would be at home in the evening, and would be very sorry if he missed us. Mr Boyd was called out of the room. I was very desirous to stay in so comfortable a house, and I wished to see Lord Errol. Dr Johnson, however, was right in resolving to go, if we were not asked again, as it is best to err on the safe side in such cases, and to be sure that one is quite welcome. To my great joy, when Mr Boyd returned, he told Dr Johnson that it was Lady Errol who had called him out, and said that she would never let Dr Johnson into the house again, if he went away that night; and that she had ordered the coach, to carry us to view a great curiosity on the coast, after which we should see the house. We cheerfully agreed.

We walked round the house till stopped by a cut made by the influx of the sea. The house is built quite upon the shore; the windows look upon the main ocean, and

the King of Denmark is Lord Errol's nearest-neighbour on the north-east.

We got immediately into the coach, and drove to Dunbui, a rock near the shore, quite covered with sea-fowls; then to a circular basen of large extent, surrounded with tremendous rocks. On the quarter next the sea, there is a high arch in the rock, which the force of the tempest has driven out. This place is called Buchan's Buller, or the Buller of Buchan, and the country people call it the Pot. Mr Boyd said it was so called from the French *Bouloir*. It may be more simply traced from *Boiler* in our own language. We walked round this monstrous cauldron. In some places, the rock is very narrow; and on each side there is a sea deep enough for a man of war to ride in; so that it is somewhat horrid to move along. However, there is earth and grass upon the rock, and a kind of road marked out by the print of feet; so that one makes it out pretty safely: yet it alarmed me to see Dr Johnson striding irregularly along. He insisted on taking a boat, and sailing into the Pot. We did so. He was stout, and wonderfully alert. The Buchan-men all shewing their teeth, and speaking with that strange sharp accent which distinguishes them, was to me a matter of curiosity. He was not sensible of the difference of pronunciation in the South, and North of Scotland, which I wondered at.

As the entry into the Buller is so narrow that oars cannot be used as you go in, the method taken is, to row very hard when you come near it, and giye the boat such a rapidity of motion that it glides in. Dr Johnson observed what an effect this scene would have had, were we entering into an unknown place. There are caves of considerable depth; I think, one on each side. The boatmen had never entered either of them far enough to know the size. Mr Boyd told us that it is customary for the company at Peterhead well,* to make parties, and come and dine in one of the caves here.

When we returned to the house we found coffee and tea in the drawing-room. Lady Errol was not there,

being, as I supposed, engaged with her young family. There is a bow-window fronting the sea.

This room is ornamented with a number of fine prints, and with a whole length picture of Lord Errol, by Sir Joshua Reynolds. This led Dr Johnson and me to talk of our amiable and elegant friend, whose panegyrick he concluded by saying, "Sir Joshua Reynolds, sir, is the most invulnerable man I know; the man with whom if you should quarrel, you would find the most difficulty how to abuse."

About nine the Earl came home. Captain Gordon of Park was with him. His lordship put Dr Johnson in mind of their having dined together in London, along with Mr Beauclerk. I was exceedingly pleased with Lord Errol. His dignified person and agreeable countenance, with the most unaffected affability, gave me high satisfaction. From perhaps a weakness, or, as I rather hope, more fancy and warmth of feeling than is quite reasonable, my mind is ever impressed with admiration for persons of high birth, and I could, with the most perfect honesty, expatiate on Lord Errol's good qualities; but he stands in no need of my praise. His agreeable manners and softness of address prevented that constraint which the idea of his being Lord High Constable of Scotland might otherwise have occasioned. He talked very easily and sensibly with his learned guest. I observed that Dr Johnson, though he shewed that respect to his lordship, which, from principle, he always does to high rank, yet, when they came to argument, maintained that manliness which becomes the force and vigour of his understanding. To shew external deference to our superiors, is proper: to seem to yield to them in opinion, is meanness. The earl said grace, both before and after supper, with much decency.

I had a most elegant room; but there was a fire in it which blazed; and the sea, to which my windows looked, roared; and the pillows were made of the feathers of some sea-fowl, which had to me a disagreeable smell: so that, by all these causes, I was kept awake a good

while. I saw, in imagination, Lord Errol's father, Lord Kilmarnock (who was beheaded on Tower-hill in 1746), and I was somewhat dreary. But the thought did not last long, and I fell asleep.

Wednesday, 25th August

We got up between seven and eight, and found Mr Boyd in the dining-room, with tea and coffee before him, to give us breakfast. We were in an admirable humour. Lady Errol had given each of us a copy of an ode by Beattie, on the birth of her son, Lord Hay. Mr Boyd asked Dr Johnson, how he liked it. Dr Johnson, who did not admire it, got off very well, by taking it out, and reading the second and third stanzas of it with much melody. This, without his saying a word, pleased Mr Boyd.

I regretted the decay of respect for men of family, and that a Nabob now would carry an election from them.—JOHNSON. "Why, sir, the Nabob* will carry it by means of his wealth, in a country where money is highly valued, as it must be where nothing can be had without money; but, if it comes to personal preference, the man of family will always carry it. There is generally a *scoundrelism* about a low man."—Mr Boyd said, that was a good *ism*.

We set out about nine. Dr Johnson was curious to see one of those structures which northern antiquarians call a Druids' temple. I had a recollection of one at Strichen; which I had seen fifteen years ago; so we went four miles out of our road, after passing Old Deer, and went thither. Mr Fraser, the proprietor, was at home, and shewed it to us. But I had augmented it in my mind; for all that remains is two stones set up on end, with a long one laid upon them, as was usual, and one stone at a little distance from them. That stone was the capital one of the circle of which surrounded what now remains. Mr Fraser was very hospitable. There was a fair at Strichen; and he had several of his neighbours from it at dinner. One of them, Dr Fraser, who had been in

the army, remembered to have seen Dr Johnson at a lecture on experimental philosophy, at Lichfield. The Doctor recollected being at the lecture; and he was surprised to find here somebody who knew him.

We got at night to Banff. I sent Joseph on to Duff-house: but Earl Life was not at home, which I regretted much, as we should have had a very elegant reception from his lordship. We found here but an indifferent inn. Dr Johnson wrote a long letter to Mrs Thrale. I wondered to see him write so much so easily. He verified his own doctrine that "a man may always write when he will set himself *doggedly* to it."

Thursday, 26th August

We got a fresh chaise here, a very good one, and very good horses. We breakfasted at Cullen. They set down dried haddocks broiled, along with our tea. I ate one; but Dr Johnson was disgusted by the sight of them, so they were removed. Cullen has a comfortable appearance, though but a very small town, and the houses mostly poor buildings.

Dr Johnson said, "It is a pity to see Lord Monboddo publish such notions as he has done; a man of sense, and of so much elegant learning. There would be little in a fool doing it; we should only laugh; but when a wise man does it, we are sorry. Other people have strange notions; but they conceal them. If they have tails, they hide them; but Monboddo is as jealous of his tail as a squirrel."

Mr Robertson sent a service with us, to shew us through Lord Findlater's wood, by which our way was shortened, and we saw some part of his domain, which is indeed admirably laid out. Dr Johnson did not choose to walk through it. He always said, that he was not come to Scotland to see fine places, of which there were enough in England; but wild objects,—mountains,—waterfalls,—peculiar manners; in short, things which he had not seen before. I have a notion that he at no time has

had much taste for rural beauties. I have myself very little.

We dined at Elgin, and saw the noble ruins of the cathedral. Though it rained much, Dr Johnson examined them with a most patient attention. He could not here feel any abhorrence at the Scottish reformers, for he had been told by Lord Hailes, that it was destroyed before the Reformation, by the Lord of Badenoch, who had a quarrel with the bishop. The bishop's house, and those of the other clergy which are still pretty entire, do not seem to have been proportioned to the magnificence of the cathedral, which has been of great extent, and had very fine carved work. The ground within the walls of the cathedral is employed as a burying-place. The family of Gordon have their vault here; but it has nothing grand.

We passed Gordon Castle this forenoon, which has a princely appearance. Fochabers, the neighbouring village, is a poor place, many of the houses being ruinous; but it is remarkable, they have in general orchards well stored with apple-trees. Elgin has what in England are called piazzas,* that run in many places on each side of the street. It must have been a much better place formerly. Probably it had piazzas all along the town, as I have seen at Bologna. I approved much of such structures in a town, on account of their conveniency in wet weather. Dr Johnson disapproved of them, "because (said he) it makes the under story of a house very dark, which greatly over-balances the conveniency, when it is considered how small a part of the year it rains; how few are usually in the street at such times; that many who are might as well be at home; and the little that people suffer, supposing them to be as much wet as they commonly are in walking a street."

We fared but ill at our inn here and Dr Johnson said, this was the first time he had seen a dinner in Scotland that he could not eat.

In the afternoon, we drove over the very heath where

Macbeth met the witches, according to tradition. Dr Johnson again solemnly repeated—

"How far is't called to Fores? What are these,
So wither'd, and so wild in their attire?
That look not like the inhabitants o' the earth,
And yet are on't?"

He repeated a good deal more of *Macbeth*. His recitation was grand and affecting, and, as Sir Joshua Reynolds has observed to me, had nò more tone than it should have: it was the better for it. He then parodied the *All-hail* of the witches to Macbeth, addressing himself to me. I had purchased some land called Dalblair; and, as in Scotland it is customary to distinguish landed men by the name of their estates, I had thus two titles, Dalblair and Young Auchinleck. So my friend, in imitation of

"All hail, Macbeth! hail to thee, Thane of Cawdor!"

condescended to amuse himself with uttering—

"All hail, Dalblair! hail to thee, Laird of Auchinleck!"*

We got to Fores at night, and found an admirable inn, in which Dr Johnson was pleased to meet with a landlord who styled himself "Wine-Cooper, from LONDON."

Friday, 27th August

It was dark when we came to Fores last night; so we did not see what is called King Duncan's monument.

We came to Nairn to breakfast. Though a county town and a royal burgh, it is a miserable place. Over the room where we sat, a girl was spinning wool with a great wheel, and singing an Erse* song: "I'll warrant you (said Dr Johnson), one of the songs of Ossian." He then repeated these lines:

"Verse sweetens toil, however rude the sound.

All at her work the village maiden sings;

Nor, while she turns the giddy wheel around,

Revolves the sad vicissitude of things."

I thought I had heard these lines before.—JOHNSON. "I

fancy not, sir; for they are in a detached poem, the name of which I do not remember, written by one Giffard, a parson."

I expected Mr Kenneth M'Aulay, the minister of Calder, who published the *History of St Kilda*, a book which Dr Johnson liked, would have met us here, as I had written to him from Aberdeen. But I received a letter from him, telling me that he could not leave home, as he was to administer the sacrament the following Sunday, and earnestly requesting to see us at his manse. "We'll go," said Dr Johnson; which we accordingly did. Mrs M'Aulay received us, and told us her husband was in the church distributing tokens.¹ We arrived between twelve and one o'clock, and it was near three before he came to us.

Dr Johnson thanked him for his book, and said "it was a very pretty piece of topography." M'Aulay did not seem much to mind the compliment. From his conversation, Dr Johnson was persuaded that he had not written the book which goes under his name. I myself always suspected so; and I have been told it was written by the learned Dr John M'Pherson of Sky, from the materials collected by M'Aulay. Dr Johnson said privately to me, "There is a combination in it of which M'Aulay is not capable." However, he was exceedingly hospitable; and, as he obligingly promised us a route for our Tour through the Western Isles, we agreed to stay with him all night.

After dinner, we walked to the old castle of Calder (pronounced Cawder), the Thane of Cawdor's seat. I was sorry that my friend, this "prosperous gentleman," was not there. The old tower must be of great antiquity. There is a drawbridge,—what has been a moat,—and an ancient court. There is a hawthorn-tree, which rises like a wooden pillar through the rooms of the castle; for, by a strange conceit, the walls have been built round it.

¹ In Scotland there is a great deal of preparation before administering the sacrament. The minister of the parish examines the people as to their fitness, and to those of whom he approves gives little pieces of tin, stamped with the name of the parish, as *tokens*, which they must produce before receiving it.

The thickness of the walls, the small slaunting windows, and a great iron door at the entrance on the second story as you ascend the stairs, all indicate the rude times in which this castle was erected. There were here some large venerable trees.

Mr M'Aulay and I laid the map of Scotland before us; and he pointed out a route for us from Inverness, by Fort Augustus, to Glenelg, Sky, Mull, Icolmkill, Lorn, and Inverary, which I wrote down. As my father was to begin the northern circuit about the 18th of September, it was necessary for us either to make our tour with great expedition, so as to get to Auchinleck before he set out, or to protract it, so as not to be there till his return, which would be about the 10th of October. By M'Aulay's calculation, we were not to land in Lorn till the 20th of September. I thought that the interruptions by bad days, or by occasional excursions, might make it ten days later; and I thought too, that we might perhaps go to Benbecula, and visit Clanranald, which would take a week of itself.

Saturday, 23th August

I should have mentioned that Mr White, a Welchman, who has been many years factor (*i.e.* steward) on the estate of Calder, drank tea with us last night, and upon getting a note from Mr M'Aulay, asked us to his house. We had not time to accept of his invitation. He gave us a letter of introduction to Mr Ferne, master of stores at Fort George. He shewed it to me. It recommended "two celebrated gentlemen; no less than Dr Johnson, *author of his Dictionary*,—and Mr. Boswell, known at Edinburgh by the name of Paoli."*—He said he hoped I had no objection to what he had written; if I had, he would alter it. I thought it was a pity to check his effusions, and acquiesced; taking care, however, to seal the letter, that it might not appear that I had read it.

We proceeded to Fort George. When we came into the square, I sent a soldier with the letter to Mr Ferne. He came to us immediately, and along with him came

Major Brewse of the Engineers, pronounced Bruce. He said he believed it was *originally the same Norman name* with Bruce. That he had dined at a house in London, where were three Bruces, one of the Irish line, one of the Scottish line, and himself of the English line. He said he was shewn it in the Herald's office spelt fourteen different ways. I told him the different spellings of my name. Dr Johnson observed, that there had been great disputes about the spelling of Shakspear's name; at last it was thought it would be settled by looking at the original copy of his will; but, upon examining it, he was found to have written it himself no less than three different ways.

Mr Ferne and Major Brewse first carried us to wait on Sir Eyre Coote, whose regiment, the 37th, was lying here, and who then commanded the fort. He asked us to dine with him, which we agreed to do.

Before dinner we examined the fort. The Major explained the fortification to us, and Mr Ferne gave us an account of the stores. Dr Johnson talked of the proportions of charcoal and saltpetre in making gunpowder, of granulating it, and of giving it a gloss. He made a very good figure upon these topics. He said to me afterwards, that "he had talked *ostentatiously*."—We reposed ourselves a little in Mr Ferne's house. He had every thing in neat order as in England; and a tolerable collection of books. I looked into Pennant's *Tour in Scotland*. He says little of this fort; but that "the barracks, etc., form several streets." This is aggrandising. Mr Ferne observed, if he had said they form a square, with a row of buildings before it, he would have given a juster description. Dr Johnson remarked, "how seldom descriptions correspond with realities; and the reason is, that people do not write them till some time after, and then their imagination has added circumstances."

At three the drum beat for dinner. I, for a little while, fancied myself a military man, and it pleased me. We went to Sir Eyre Coote's, at the governour's house, and found him a most gentleman-like man. His lady is a

very agreeable woman, with an uncommonly mild and sweet tone of voice. There was a pretty large company: Mr Ferne, Major Brewse, and several officers. Sir Eyre had come from the East-Indies by land, through the Desarts of Arabia. He told us, the Arabs could live five days without victuals, and subsist for three weeks on nothing else but the blood of their camels, who could lose so much of it as would suffice for that time, without being exhausted. He highly praised the virtue of the Arabs; their fidelity, if they undertook to conduct any person; and said, they would sacrifice their lives rather than let him be robbed. Dr Johnson, who is always for maintaining the superiority of civilized over uncivilized men, said, "Why, sir, I can see no superior virtue in this. A serjeant and twelve men, who are my guard, will die, rather than that I shall be robbed."—Colonel Pennington, of the 37th regiment, took up the argument with a good deal of spirit and ingenuity. — PENNINGTON. "But the soldiers are compelled to this, by fear of punishment."—JOHNSON. "Well, sir, the Arabs are compelled by the fear of infamy."—PENNINGTON. "The soldiers have the same fear of infamy, and the fear of punishment besides; so have less virtue; because they act less voluntarily."—Lady Coote observed very well, that it ought to be known if there was not, among the Arabs, some punishment for not being faithful on such occasions.

We had a dinner of two complete courses, variety of wines, and the regimental band of musick playing in the square, before the windows, after it. I enjoyed this day much. We were quite easy and cheerful. Dr Johnson said, "I shall always remember this fort with gratitude." I could not help being struck with some admiration, at finding upon this barren sandy point, such buildings,—such a dinner,—such company: it was like enchantment. Dr Johnson, on the other hand, said to me more rationally, that "it did not strike *him* as anything extraordinary; because he knew, here was a large sum of money expended in building a fort; here was a regiment. If there had been less than what we found, it would have surprized

him." *He* looked coolly and deliberately through all the gradations: my warm imagination jumped from the barren sands to the splendid dinner and brilliant company, to borrow the expression of an absurd poet,

"Without ands or ifs,
I leapt from off the sands upon the cliffs."

The whole scene gave me a strong impression of the power and excellence of human art.

We left the fort between six and seven o'clock: Sir Eyre Coote, Colonel Pennington, and several more, accompanied us down stairs, and saw us into our chaise. There could not be greater attention paid to any visitors. Sir Eyre spoke of the hardships which Dr Johnson had before him.—BOSWELL. "Considering what he has said of us, we must make him feel something rough in Scotland."—Sir Eyre said to him, "You must change your name, sir."—BOSWELL. "Ay, to Dr McGregor."

We got safely to Inverness, and put up at Mackenzie's inn.

Not finding a letter here that I expected, I felt a momentary impatience to be at home. Transient clouds darkened my imagination, and in those clouds I saw events from which I shrunk; but a sentence or two of the Rambler's conversation gave me firmness, and I considered that I was upon an expedition for which I had wished for years, and the recollection of which would be a treasure to me for life.

Sunday, 29th August

The English chapel, to which we went this morning, was but mean. The altar was a bare fir table, with a coarse stool for kneeling on, covered with a piece of thick sailcloth doubled, by way of cushion. The congregation was small. Mr Tait, the clergyman, read prayers very well, though with much of the Scotch accent. He preached on "Love your Enemies." It was remarkable that, when talking of the connections amongst men, he said, that some connected themselves with men of

distinguished talents, and since they could not equal them, tried to deck themselves with their merit, by being their companions. The sentence was to this purpose. It had an odd coincidence with what might be said of my connecting myself with Dr Johnson.

After church, we walked down to the Quay. We then went to Macbeth's castle. I had a romantick satisfaction in seeing Dr Johnson actually in it. It perfectly corresponds with Shakspeare's description, which Sir Joshua Reynolds has so happily illustrated in one of his notes on our immortal poet :

"This castle hath a pleasant seat : the air
Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself
Unto our gentle sense," etc.

Just as we came out of it, a raven perched on one of the chimney-tops, and croaked. Then I repeated :

"— The raven himself is hoarse,
That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
Under my battlements."

Having conducted Dr Johnson to our inn, I begged permission to leave him for a little, that I might run about and pay some short visits to several good people of Inverness. He said to me, "You have all the old-fashioned principles, good and bad." I acknowledge I have. That of attention to relations in the remotest degree, or to worthy persons, in every state whom I have once known, I inherit from my father. It gave me much satisfaction to hear everybody at Inverness speak of him with uncommon regard.—Mr Keith and Mr Grant, whom we had seen at Mr M'Aulay's, supped with us at the inn. We had roasted kid, which Dr Johnson had never tasted before. He relished it much.

Monday, 30th August

This day we were to begin our *equitation*,* as I said ; for I would needs make a word too.

We might have taken a chaise to Fort Augustus, but,

had we not hired horses at Inverness, we should not have found them afterwards: so we resolved to begin here to ride. We had three horses, for Dr Johnson, myself, and Joseph, and one which carried our portmanteaus, and two Highlanders who walked along with us, John Hay and Lauchland Vass, whom Dr Johnson has remembered with credit in his *Journey*, though he has omitted their names. Dr Johnson rode very well.

It was a delightful day. Lochness, and the road upon the side of it, shaded with birch-trees, and the hills above it, pleased us much. The scene was as sequestered and agreeably wild as could be desired, and for a time engrossed all our attention.

To see Dr Johnson in any new situation is always an interesting object to me; and, as I saw him now for the first time on horseback, jaunting about at his ease in quest of pleasure and novelty, the very different occupations of his former laborious life, his admirable productions, his *London*, his *Rambler*, etc., etc., immediately presented themselves to my mind, and the contrast made a strong impression on my imagination.

When we had advanced a good way by the side of Lochness, I perceived a little hut, with an old looking woman at the door of it. I thought here might be a scene that would amuse Dr Johnson; so I mentioned it to him. "Let's go in," said he. We dismounted, and we and our guides entered the hut. It was a wretched little hovel of earth only, I think, and for a window had only a small hole, which was stopp'd with a piece of turf, that was taken out occasionally to let in light. In the middle of the room or space which we entered, was a fire of peat, the smoke going out at a hole in the roof. She had a pot upon it, with goat's flesh, boiling. There was at one end under the same roof, but divided by a kind of partition made of wattles, a pen or fold in which we saw a good many kids.

Dr Johnson was curious to know where she slept. I asked one of the guides, who questioned her in Erse.

Dr Johnson would not hurt her delicacy, by insisting

on "seeing her bed-chamber." But my curiosity was more ardent; I lighted a piece of paper, and went into the place where the bed was. There was a little partition of wicker, rather more neatly done than that for the fold, and close by the wall was a kind of bedstead of wood with heath upon it by way of bed; at the foot of which I saw some sort of blankets or covering rolled up in a heap. The woman's name was Fraser; so was her husband's. He was a man of eighty. Mr Fraser of Balnain allows him to live in this hut, and keep sixty goats, for taking care of his woods, where he then was. They had five children, the eldest only thirteen. Two were gone to Inverness to buy meal; the rest were looking after the goats. This contented family had four stacks of barley, twenty-four sheaves in each. They had a few fowls. We were informed that they lived all the spring without meal, upon milk and curds and whey alone. What they get for their goats, kids, and fowls, maintains them during the rest of the year.

She asked us to sit down and take a dram. I saw one chair. She said she was as happy as any woman in Scotland. She could hardly speak any English except a few detached words. Dr Johnson was pleased at seeing, for the first time, such a state of human life. She asked for snuff. It is her luxury, and she uses a great deal. We had none; but gave her sixpence a piece. She then brought out her whisky bottle. I tasted it; as did Joseph and our guides: so I gave her sixpence more. She sent us away with many prayers in Erse.

We dined at a publick house called the General's Hut, from General Wade, who was lodged there when he commanded in the North. Near it is the meanest parish Kirk I ever saw. It is a shame it should be on a high road. After dinner, we passed through a good deal of mountainous country. I had known Mr Trapaud, the deputy governour of Fort Augustus, twelve years ago, at a circuit at Inverness, where my father was judge. I sent forward one of our guides, and Joseph, with a card to

him, that he might know Dr Johnson and I were coming up, leaving it to him to invite us or not. It was dark when we arrived. The Inn was wretched. Government ought to build one, or give the resident governour an additional salary; as in the present state of things, he must necessarily be put to a great expence in entertaining travellers. Joseph announced to us, when we alighted, that the governour waited for us at the gate of the fort. We walked to it. He met us, and with much civility conducted us to his house. It was comfortable to find ourselves in a well built little square, and a neatly furnished house, in good company, and with a good supper before us; in short, with all the conveniencies of civilized life in the midst of rude mountains. Mrs Trapaud, and the governour's daughter, and her husband, Captain Newmarsh, were all most obliging and polite. The governour had excellent animal spirits, the conversation of a soldier, and somewhat of a Frenchman, to which his extraction entitles him. He is brother to General Cyrus Trapaud. We passed a very agreeable evening.

Tuesday, 31st August

The governour has a very good garden. We looked at it, and at the rest of the fort, which is but small, and may be commanded from a variety of hills around. We also looked at the galley or sloop belonging to the fort, which sails upon the Loch, and brings what is wanted for the garrison. Captains Urie and Darippe, of the 15th regiment of foot, breakfasted with us. They had served in America, and entertained Dr Johnson much with an account of the Indians. He said, he could make a very pretty book out of them, were he to stay there. Governour Trapaud was much strock with Dr Johnson. "I like to hear him (said he), it is so majestic. I should be glad to hear him speak in your court."—He pressed us to stay dinner; but I considered that we had a rude road before us, which we could more easily encounter in the morning, and that it was hard to say when we might get up, were

we to sit down to good entertainment, in good company: I therefore begged the governour would excuse us.—Here too, I had another very pleasing proof how much my father is regarded. The governour expressed the highest respect for him, and bade me tell him, that, if he would come that way on the Northern circuit, he would do him all the honours of the garrison.

Between twelve and one we set out, and travelled eleven miles, through a wild country, till we came to a house in Glenmorison, called Anoch, kept by a M'Queen.¹ Our landlord was a sensible fellow; he had learnt his grammar, and Dr Johnson justly observed, that "a man is the better for that as long as he lives."

Near to this place we had passed a party of soldiers, under a serjeant's command, at work upon the road. We gave them two shillings to drink. They came to our Inn, and made merry in the barn. We went and paid them a visit, Dr Johnson saying, "Come, let's go and give 'em another shilling a-piece." We did so; and he was saluted "MY LORD" by all of them. He is really generous, loves influence, and has the way of gaining it. He said, "I am quite feudal, sir." Here I agree with him. I said, I regretted I was not the head of a clan; however, though not possessed of such an hereditary advantage, I would always endeavour to make my tenants follow me. I could not be a *patriarchal* chief, but I would be a *feudal* chief.

The poor soldiers got too much liquor. Some of them fought, and left blood upon the spot, and cursed whisky next morning. The house here was built of thick turfs, and thatched with thinner turfs and heath. It had three rooms in length, and a little room which projected. Where we sat, the side-walls were wainscotted, as Dr

¹ A M'Queen is a Highland mode of expression. An Englishman would say *our* M'Queen. But where there are *clans* or *tribes* of men, distinguished by *patronymick* surnames, the individuals of each are considered as if they were of different species, at least as much as nations are distinguished; so that a M'Queen, a M'Donald, a M'Lean, is said, as we say a Frenchman, an Italian, a Spaniard.

Johnson said, with wicker, very neatly plaited. Our landlord had made the whole with his own hands.

After dinner, M'Queen sat by us a while, and talked with us. He said, all the Laird of Glenmorison's people would bleed for him, if they were well used; but that seventy men had gone out of the Glen to America. That he himself intended to go next year; for that the rent of his farm, which twenty years ago was only five pounds, was now raised to twenty pounds. That he could pay ten pounds, and live; but no more.—Dr Johnson said, he wished M'Queen laird of Glenmorison, and the laird to go to America. M'Queen very generously answered, he should be sorry for it; for the laird could not shift for himself in America as he could do.

We had tea in the afternoon, and our landlord's daughter, a modest civil girl, very neatly dressed, made it for us. She told us, she had been a year at Inverness, and learnt reading and writing, sewing, knotting, working lace, and pastry. Dr Johnson made her a present of a book which he had bought at Inverness.¹

The room had some deals laid across the joists as a kind of ceiling. There were two beds in the room, and a woman's gown was hung on a rope to make a curtain of separation between them. Joseph had sheets, which my wife had sent with us, laid on them. We had much hesitation, whether to undress, or lie down with our clothes on. I said at last, "I'll plunge in! There will be less harbour for vermin about me, when I am stripped!"—Dr Johnson said, he was like one hesitating whether to go into the cold bath. At last he resolved too. I observed, he might serve a campaign.—JOHNSON. "I

¹ This book has given rise to much inquiry, which has ended in ludicrous surprise. Several ladies, wishing to learn the kind of reading which the great and good Dr Johnson esteemed most fit for a young woman, desired to know what book he had selected for this Highland nymph. "They never adverted (said he) that I had no choice in the matter. I have said that I presented her with a book which I happened to have about me."—And what was this book?—My readers, prepare your features for merriment. It was *Cocker's Arithmetic*!—Wherever this was mentioned, there was a loud laugh, at which Dr Johnson, when present, used sometimes to be a little angry.

could do all that can be done by patience: whether I should have strength enough, I know not."—He was in excellent humour. To see the Rambler as I saw him to-night, was really an amusement. I yesterday told him, I was thinking of writing a poetical letter to him, *on his return from Scotland*, in the stile of Swift's humorous epistle in the character of Mary Gulliver to her husband, Captain Lemuel Gulliver, on his return to England from the country of the Houyhnhnms:

"At early morn I to the market haste,
 Studious in ev'ry thing to please thy taste,
 A curious *fowl* and *sparagrass* I chose;
 (For I remember you were fond of those:)
 Three shillings cost the first, the last sev'n groats;
 Sullen you turn from both, and call for OATS."*

After we had offered up our private devotions, and had chatted a little from our beds, Dr Johnson said, "God bless us both, for Jesus Christ's sake! Good night!"—I pronounced "Amen."—He fell asleep immediately. I was not so fortunate for a long time. I fancied myself bit by innumerable vermin under the clothes; and that a spider was travelling from the wainscot towards my mouth. At last I fell into insensibility.

Wednesday, 1st September

I awaked very early. I began to imagine that the landlord, being about to emigrate, might murder us to get our money, and lay it upon the soldiers in the barn. Such groundless fears will arise in the mind, before it has resumed its vigour after sleep! Dr Johnson had had the same kind of ideas; for he told me afterwards, that he considered so many soldiers, having seen us, would be witnesses, should any harm be done, and that circumstance, I suppose, be considered as a security. When I got up, I found him sound asleep in his miserable *stye*, as I may call it, with a coloured handkerchief tied round his head. With difficulty could I awaken him. It reminded me of Henry the Fourth's fine

soliloquy on sleep*; for there was here as *uneasy a pallet* as the poet's imagination could possibly conceive.

A *red coat* of the 15th regiment, whether officer, or only serjeant, I could not be sure, came to the house, in his way to the mountains to shoot deer, which it seems the Laird of Glenmorison does not hinder any body to do. Few, indeed, can do them harm. We had him to breakfast with us. We got away about eight. M'Queen walked some miles to give us a convoy. He had, in 1745, joined the Highland army at Fort Augustus, and continued in it till after the battle of Culloden. As he narrated the particulars of that ill-advised, but brave attempt, I could not refrain from tears. There is a certain association of ideas in my mind upon that subject, by which I am strongly affected. The very Highland names, or the sound of a bagpipe, will stir my blood, and fill me with a mixture of melancholy and respect for courage; with pity for an unfortunate and superstitious regard for antiquity, and thoughtless inclination for war; in short, with a crowd of sensations with which sober rationality has nothing to do.

We passed through Glensheal, with prodigious mountains on each side. We saw where the battle was fought in the year 1719. Dr Johnson owned he was now in a scene of as wild nature as he could see; but he corrected me sometimes in my inaccurate observations.—"There (said I) is a mountain like a cone."—JOHNSON. "No, sir. It would be called so in a book; and when a man comes to look at it, he sees it is not so. It is indeed pointed at the top; but one side of it is larger than the other."—Another mountain I called immense.—JOHNSON. "No; it is no more than a considerable protuberance."

We came to a rich green valley, comparatively speaking, and stopped a while to let our horses rest and eat grass.¹

¹ Dr Johnson, in his *Journey*, thus beautifully describes his situation here: "I sat down on a bank, such as a writer of romance might have delighted to feign. I had, indeed, no trees to whisper over my head; but a clear rivulet streamed at my feet. The day was calm, the air soft, and all was rudeness, silence, and solitude. Before me, and on either side, were high hills, which, by hindering the eye from ranging, forced the mind to find entertainment for itself. Whether I spent the hour well, I know not; for here I first conceived the thought of this narration."

We soon afterwards came to Auchnasheal, a kind of rural village, a number of cottages being built together, as we saw all along in the Highlands. We passed many miles this day without seeing a house, but only little summer-huts, called *shielings*. Evan Campbell, servant to Mr Murchison, factor to the Laird of Macleod in Glenelg, ran along with us to-day. He was a very obliging fellow. At Auchnasheal, we sat down on a green turf-seat at the end of a house; they brought us two wooden dishes of milk, which we tasted. One of them was frothed like a syllabub.* I saw a woman preparing it with such a stiek as is used for chocolate, and in the same manner. We had a considerable circle about us, men, women and children, all M'Craas, Lord Seaforth's people. Not one of them could speak English. I observed to Dr Johnson, it was much the same thing as being with a tribe of Indians.—JOHNSON. "Yes, sir; but not so terrifying." I gave all who chose it, snuff and tobacco. Governour Trapaud had made us buy a quantity at Fort Augustus, and put them up in small parcels. I also gave each person a bit of wheat bread, which they had never tasted before. I then gave a penny apiece to each child. I told Dr Johnson of this; upon which he called to Joseph and our guides, for change for a shilling, and declared that he would distribute among the children. Upon this being announced in Erse, there was a great stir; not only did some children come running down from neighbouring huts, but I observed one black-haired man, who had been with us all along, had gone off, and returned, bringing a very young child. My fellow traveller then ordered the children to be drawn up in a row; and he dealt about his copper, and made them and their parents all happy. The poor M'Craas, whatever may be their present state, were of considerable estimation in the year 1715, when there was a line in a song,

" And aw the brave M'Craas are coming."

There was great diversity in the faces of the circle around us: Some were as black and wild in their

appearance as any American savages whatever. One woman was as comely almost as the figure of Sappho, as we see it painted. We asked the old woman, the mistress of the house where we had the milk (which bye the bye, Dr Johnson told me for I did not observe it myself, was



DR JOHNSON AND THE HIGHLAND CHILDREN

(From Carruthers's Edition, 1859)

built not of turf, but of stone), what we should pay. She said, what we pleased. One of our guides asked her, in Erse, if a shilling was enough. She said, "Yes." But some of the men bade her ask more. This vexed me, because it showed a desire to impose upon strangers, as they knew that even a shilling was high payment. The

woman, however, honestly persisted in her first price; so I gave her half a crown.—Thus we had one good scene of life, uncommon to us. The people were very much pleased, gave us many blessings, and said they had not had such a day since the old Laird of Macleod's time.

Dr Johnson was much refreshed by this repast. He was pleased when I told him he would make a good Chief. He said, "Were I a chief, I would dress my servants better than myself, and knock a fellow down if he looked saucy to a Macdonald in rags; but I would not treat men as brutes. I would let them know why all my clan were to have attention paid to them. I would tell my upper servants why, and make them tell the others."

We rode on well, till we came to the high mountain called the Rattakin, by which time both Dr Johnson and the horses were a good deal fatigued. It is a terrible steep to climb, notwithstanding the road is formed slanting along it; however, we made it out. On the top of it we met Captain M'Leod of Balmenoch (a Dutch officer* who had come from Sky) riding with his sword slung across him. He asked, "Is this Mr Boswell?" which was a proof that we were expected. Going down the hill on the other side was no easy task. As Dr Johnson was a great weight, the two guides agreed that he should ride the horses alternately. Hay's were the two best, and the Doctor would not ride but upon one or other of them, a black or a brown. But, as Hay complained much after ascending the Rattakin, the Doctor was prevailed with to mount one of Vass's greys. As he rode upon it down hill, it did not go well; and he grumbled. I walked on a little before, but was excessively entertained with the method taken to keep him in good humour. Hay led the horse's head, talking to Dr Johnson as much as he could; and (having heard him, in the forenoon, express a pastoral pleasure on seeing the goats browsing) just when the Doctor was uttering his displeasure, the fellow cried, with a very Highland accent, "See such pretty goats!" Then he whistled, *whu!* and made them jump.—Little did he conceive what Dr Johnson was. Here now was a

common ignorant Highland clown imagining that he could divert, as one does a child,—Dr Samuel Johnson!—The ludicrousness, absurdity, and extraordinary contrast between what the fellow fancied, and the reality, was truly comick.

It grew dusky, and we had a very tedious ride for what was called five miles; but I am sure would measure ten. We had no conversation. I was riding forward to the inn at Glenelg, on the shore opposite to Sky, that I might take proper measures, before Dr Johnson, who was now advancing in dreary silence, Hay leading his horse, should arrive.

As we passed the harracks at Bernéra, I looked at them wishfully, as soldiers have always everything in the best order: but there was only a serjeant and a few men there. We came on to the inn at Glenelg. There was no provender for our horses; so they were sent to grass, with a man to watch them. A maid showed us up stairs into a room, damp and dirty, with bare walls, a variety of bad smells, a coarse black greasy fir table, and forms of the same kind; and out of a wretched bed started a fellow from his sleep, like Edgar in *King Lear*, "Poor Tom's a-cold."¹

This inn was furnished with not a single article that we could either eat or drink; but Mr Murchison, factor to the Laird of Macleod in Glenelg, sent us a bottle of rum and some sugar, with a polite message to acquaint us that he was very sorry that he did not hear of us till we had passed his house, otherwise he should have insisted on our sleeping there that night; and that, if he were not obliged to set out for Inverness early next morning, he would have waited upon us.—Such extraordinary attention from this gentleman, to entire strangers, deserves the most honourable commemoration.

Our bad accommodation here made me uneasy, and almost fretful. Dr Johnson was calm. I said, he was so from vanity.—JOHNSON. "No, sir, it is from philosophy."

¹ It is amusing to observe the different images which this being presented to Dr Johnson and me. The Doctor, in his *Journal*, compares him to a Cyclops.

—It pleased me to see that the Rambler could practise so well his own lessons.

I sent for fresh hay, with which we made beds for ourselves, each in a room equally miserable. Like Wolfe, we had a "choice of difficulties." * Dr Johnson made things easier by comparison. At M'Queen's, last night, he observed, that few were so well lodged in a ship. To-night he said, we were better than if we had been upon the hill. He lay down buttoned up in his great coat. I had my sheets spread on the hay, and my clothes and great coat laid over me, by way of blankets.

* *Thursday, 2nd September*

After breakfast, we got into a boat for Sky. It rained much when we set off, but cleared up as we advanced. One of the boatmen, who spoke English, said, that a mile nt land was two miles at sea. I then observed, that from Glenelg to Armidale in Sky, which was our present course, and is called twelve, was only six miles: but this he could not understand. "Well (said Dr Johnson), never talk to me of the native good sense of the Highlanders. Here is a fellow who calls one mile two, and yet cannot comprehend that twelve such imaginary miles make in truth but six."

We reached the shore of Armidale before one o'clock. Sir Alexander M'Donald came down to receive us.

Armidale is situated on a pretty bay of the narrow sea, which flows between the main land of Scotland and the Isle of Sky. In front there is a grand prospect of the rude mountains of Moidart and Knoidart. Behind are hills gently rising and covered with a finer verdure than I expected to see in this climate, and the scene is enlivened by a number of little clear brooks.

We found here Mr James of Aberdeenshire, a naturalist. James said he had been at Dr Johnson's in London, with Ferguson the astronomer. — JOHNSON. "It is strange that, in such distant places, I should meet with any one who knows me. I should have thought that I might hide myself in Sky."

Friday, 3rd September

This day proving wet, we should have passed our time very uncomfortably, had we not found in the house two chests of books, which we eagerly ransacked.

We were advised by some persons here to visit Rasay, on our way to Dunvegan, the seat of the Laird of Macleod. Being informed that the Rev. Mr Donald M'Queen was the most intelligent man in Sky, and having been favoured with a letter of introduction to him, by the learned Sir James Foulis, I sent it to him by an express, and requested he would meet us at Rasay; and at the same time enclosed a letter to the Laird of Macleod, informing him that we intended in a few days to have the honour of waiting on him at Dunvegan.

Dr Johnson this day endeavoured to obtain some knowledge of the state of the country; but complained that he could get no distinct information about any thing, from those with whom he conversed.

Saturday, 4th September

My endeavours to rouse the English-bred Chieftain, in whose house we were, to the feudal and patriarchal feelings, proving ineffectual, Dr Johnson this morning tried to bring him to our way of thinking.—JOHNSON. "Were I in your place, sir, in seven years I would make this an Independent island. I would roast oxen whole, and hang out a flag as a signal to the Macdonalds to come and get beef and whisky."—Sir Alexander was still starting difficulties.—JOHNSON. "Nay, sir; if you are born to object, I have done with you. Sir, I would have a magazine of arms."—SIR ALEXANDER. "They would rust."—JOHNSON. "Let there be men to keep them clean. Your ancestors did not use to let their arms rust."

We attempted in vain to communicate to him a portion of our enthusiasm. He bore with so polite a good-nature our warm, and what some might call Gothick,*

expostulations on this subject, that I should not forgive myself were I to record all that Dr Johnson's ardour led him to say.—This day was little better than a blank.

Sunday, 5th September

I walked to the parish church of Slate, which is a very poor one. There are no church bells on the island. I was told there were, once some; what has become of them, I could not learn. The minister not being at home, there was no service.

This being a beautiful day, my spirits were cheered by the mere effect of climate. I had felt a return of spleen during my stay at Armidale, and had it not been that I had Dr Johnson to contemplate, I should have sunk into dejection; but his firmness supported me. I looked at him, as a man whose head is turning giddy at sea looks at a rock, or any fixed object. I wondered at his tranquillity. He said, "Sir, when a man retires into an island, he is to turn his thoughts entirely to another world. He has done with this."

I must here observe, that though Dr Johnson appeared now to be philosophically calm, yet his genius did not shine forth as in companies, where I have listened to him with admiration. The vigour of his mind was, however, sufficiently manifested, by his discovering no symptoms of feeble relaxation in the dull, "weary, flat and unprofitable" state in which we now were placed.

Monday, 6th September

We set out, accompanied by Mr Donald M'Leod (late of Canna) as our guide. We rode for some time along the district of Slate, near the shore. The houses in general are made of turf, covered with grass. The country seemed well peopled. We came into the district of Strath, and passed along a wild moorish tract of land till we arrived at the shore. There we found good verdure, and some curious whin-rocks, or collections of stones like the ruins of the foundations of

old buildings. We saw also three Cairns of considerable size.

About a mile beyond Broadfoot, is Corrichatachin, a farm of Sir Alexander Macdonald's, possessed by Mr M'Kinnon, who received us with a hearty welcome, as did his wife, who was what we call in Scotland a *lady-like* woman. Mr Pennant, in the course of his tour to the Hebrides, passed two nights at this gentleman's house. On its being mentioned, that a present had



A HEBRIDEAN COITAGE IN 1773

here been made to him of a curious specimen of Highland antiquity, Dr Johnson said, "Sir, it was more than he deserved: the dog is a whig."

We here enjoyed the comfort of a table plentifully furnished, the satisfaction of which was heightened by a numerous and cheerful company, and we for the first time had a specimen of the joyous social manners of the inhabitants of the Highlands. They talked in their own ancient language, with fluent vivacity, and sung many Erse songs with such spirit, that, though Dr Johnson was treated with the greatest respect and attention,

there were moments in which he seemed to be forgotten. For myself, though but a *Lowlander*, having picked up a few words of the language, I presumed to mingle in their mirth, and joined in the chorusses with as much glee as any of the company. Dr Johnson being fatigued with his journey, retired early to his chamber.

Tuesday, 7th September

It was a very wet stormy day; we were therefore obliged to remain here, it being impossible to cross the sea to Rasay.

I employed a part of the forenoon in writing this Journal. The rest of it was somewhat dreary, from the gloominess of the weather, and the uncertain state which we were in, as we could not tell but it might clear up every hour. Nothing is more painful to the mind than a state of suspense, especially when it depends upon the weather, concerning which there can be so little calculation. As Dr Johnson said of our weariness on the Monday at Aberdeen, "Sensation is sensation": Corrichatachin, which was last night a hospitable house, was, in my mind, changed to-day into a prison.

He enquired here if there were any remains of the second sight. Mrs M'Kinnon, who is a daughter of old Kingsburgh, told us that her father was one day riding in Sky, and some women, who were at work in a field on the side of the road, said to him, they had heard two *taiscks* (that is, two voices of persons about to die), and what was remarkable, one of them was an *English taisck*, which they never heard before. When he returned, he at that very place met two funerals, and one of them was that of a woman who had come from the main land, and could speak only English. This, she remarked, made a great impression upon her father.

How all the people here were lodged, I know not. It was partly done by separating man and wife, and putting a number of men in one room, and of women in another.

Wednesday, 8th September

When I waked, the rain was much heavier than yesterday; but the wind had abated. By breakfast, the day was better, and in a little while it was calm and clear. I felt my spirits much elated. The propriety of the expression, "the sunshine of the breast," now struck me with peculiar force; for the brilliant rays penetrated into my very soul. We were all in better humour than before. Mrs M'Kinnon, with unaffected hospitality and politeness, expressed her happiness in having such company in her house, and appeared to understand and relish Dr Johnson's conversation, as indeed all the company seemed to do. When I knew she was old Kingsburgh's daughter, I did not wonder at the good appearance which she made.

She talked as if her husband and family would emigrate, rather than be oppressed by their landlord; and said, "how agreeable would it be, if these gentlemen should come in upon us when we are in America."—Somebody observed that Sir Alexander Macdonald was always frightened at sea.—JOHNSON. "*He* is frightened at sea; and his tenants are frightened when he comes to land."

We resolved to set out directly after breakfast. We had about two miles to ride to the sea-side, and there we expected to get one of the boats belonging to the fleet of bounty herring-busses then on the coast, or at least a good country fishing-boat. But while we were preparing to set out, there arrived a man with the following card from the Reverend Mr Donald M'Queen:

"Mr M'Queen's compliments to Mr Boswell, and begs leave to acquaint him that, fearing the want of a proper boat, as much as the rain of yesterday, might have caused a stop, he is now at Skianwden with Macgillichallum's¹ carriage, to convey him and Dr Johnson to Rasay, where they will meet with a most hearty welcome,

¹ The Highland expression for Laird of Rasay.

and where Macleod, being on a visit, now attends their motions.

"Wednesday afternoon."

This card was most agreeable; it was a prologue to that hospitable and truly polite reception which we found at Rasay. In a little while arrived Mr Donald M'Queen himself; a decent minister, an elderly man with his own black hair, courteous, and rather slow of speech, but candid, sensible and well informed, nay learned. Along with him came, as our pilot, a gentleman whom I had a great desire to see, Mr Malcolm Macleod, one of the Rasay family, celebrated in the year 1745-6. He was now sixty-two years of age, hale, and well proportioned,—with a manly countenance, tanned by the weather, yet having a ruddiness in his cheeks, over a great part of which his rough beard extended.—His eye was quick and lively, yet his look was not fierce, but he appeared at once firm and good-humoured. He wore a pair of brogues,—Tartan hose which came up only near to his knees, and left them bare,—a purple camblet* kilt,—a black waistcoat,—a short green cloth coat bound with gold cord,—a yellowish bushy wig,—a large blue bonnet with a gold thread button. I never saw a figure that gave a more perfect representation of a Highland gentleman. I wished much to have a picture of him just as he was. I found him frank and *polite*, in the true sense of the word.

The good family at Corrichatachin said, they hoped to see us on our return. We rode down to the shore; but Malcolm walked with graceful agility.

We got into Rasay's *carriage*, which was a good strong open boat made in Norway. The wind had now risen pretty high, and was against us; but we had four stout rowers, particularly a Macleod, a robust, black-haired fellow, half naked, and bare-headed, something between a wild Indian and an English tar. Dr Johnson sat high on the stern, like a magnificent Triton. Malcolm sung an Erse song, the chorus of which was "*Hatyin foam foam eri*," with words of his own. The tune resembled *Our the*

Muir among the Heather. The boatmen and Mr M'Queen chorused, and all went well. At length Malcolm himself took an oar, and rowed vigorously. We sailed along the coast of Scalpa, a rugged island, about four miles in length.

Here I was strongly struck with our long projected scheme of visiting the Hebrides being realized. I called to him, "We are contending with seas"; which I think were the words of one of his letters to me. "Not much," said he; and though the wind made the sea lash considerably upon us, he was not discomposed. After we were out of the shelter of Scalpa, and in the sound between it and Rasay, which extended about a league, the wind made the sea very rough. I did not like it.—JOHNSON. "This now is the Atlantick. If I should tell at a tea table in London, that I have crossed the Atlantick in an open boat, how they'd shudder, and what a fool they'd think me to expose myself to such danger!"

The approach to Rasay was very pleasing. We saw before us a beautiful bay, well defended by a rocky coast; a good family mansion; a fine verdure about it,—with a considerable number of trees;—and beyond it hills and mountains in gradation of wildness. Our boatmen sung with great spirit. Dr Johnson observed, that naval musick was very ancient. As we came near the shore, the singing of our rowers was succeeded by that of reapers, who were busy at work, and who seemed to shout as much as to sing, while they worked with a bounding activity. Just as we landed, I observed a cross, or rather the ruins of one, upon a rock, which had to me a pleasing vestige of religion. I perceived a large company coming out from the house. We met them as we walked up. There were Rasay himself; his brother Dr Macleod; his nephew the Laird of M'Kinnon; the Laird of Macleod; Colonel Macleod of Talisker, an officer in the Dutch service, a very genteel man, and a faithful branch of the family; Mr Macleod of Muiravenside, best known by the name of Sandie Macleod, who was long in exile on account of the part which he took in 1745; and several other persons. We were welcomed upon the green, and conducted into

the house, where we were introduced to Lady Kasay, who was surrounded by a numerous family, consisting of three sons and ten daughters. The laird of Kasay is a sensible, polite, and most hospitable gentleman. I was told that his island of Rasay, and that of Rona (from which the eldest son of the family has his title), and a considerable extent of land which he has in Sky, do not altogether yield him a very large revenue: and yet he lives in great splendour; and so far is he from distressing his people, that, in the present rage for emigration, not a man has left his estate.

It was past six o'clock when we arrived. Some excellent brandy was served round immediately, according to the custom of the Highlands, where a dram is generally taken every day. They call it a *scalch*. On a side-board was placed for us, who had come off the sea, a substantial dinner, and a variety of wines. Then we had coffee and tea. I observed in the room several elegantly bound books and other marks of improved life. Soon afterwards a fidler appeared, and a little ball began. Kasay himself danced with as much spirit as any man, and Malcolm bounded like a roe. Sandie Macleod, who has at times an excessive flow of spirits, and had it now, was, in his days of absconding, known by the name of *M^r Cruslick*, which it seems was the designation of a kind of wild man in the Highlands, something between Proteus and Don Quixotte; and so he was called here. He made much jovial noise. Dr Johnson was so delighted with this scene, that he said, "I know not how we shall get away." It entertained me to observe him sitting by, while we danced, sometimes in deep meditation,—sometimes smiling complacently,—sometimes looking upon Hooke's *Roman History*,—and sometimes talking a little, amidst the noise of the ball, to Mr Donald M'Queen, who anxiously gathered knowledge from him. He was pleased with M'Queen, and said to me, "This is a critical man, sir. There must be great vigour of mind to make him cultivate learning so much in the isle of Sky, where he might do without it. It is wonderful how many of the

new publications he has. There must be a snatch of every opportunity." Mr M'Queen told me that his brother (who is the fourth generation of the family following each other as ministers of the parish of Snizort) and he joined together, and bought from time to time such books as had reputation. Soon after we came in, a black cock and grey hen,* which had been shot, were shewn, with their feathers on, to Dr Johnson, who had never seen that species of bird before. We had a company of thirty at supper; and all was good humour and gaiety, without intemperance.

Thursday, 9th September

At breakfast this morning, among a profusion of other things, there were oat-cakes, made of what is called *graddaned* meal, that is, meal made of grain separated from the husks, and toasted by fire, instead of being threshed and kiln dried.—This seems to be bad management, as so much fodder is consumed by it. Mr M'Queen however defended it, by saying, that it is doing the thing much quicker, as one operation effects what is otherwise done by two. His chief reason however was, that the servants in Sky are, according to him, a faithless pack, and steal what they can; so that much is saved by the corn passing but once through their hands, as at each time they pilfer some. It appears to me, that the gradaning is a strong proof of the laziness of the Highlanders, who will rather make fire act for them, at the expence of fodder, than labour themselves. There was also, what I cannot help disliking at breakfast, cheese: it is the custom over all the Highlands to have it; and it often smells very strong, and poisons to a certain degree the elegance of an Indian repast. The day was showery; however, Rasay and I took a walk, and had some cordial conversation. I conceived a more than ordinary regard for this worthy gentleman. His family has possessed this island above four hundred years. It is the remains of the estate of Macleod of Lewis, whom he represents.—When we returned, Dr Johnson walked with us to see the old chapel. He was in fine spirits.

He said, "This is truly the patriarchal life: this is what we came to find."

Friday, 10th September

Having resolved to explore the island of Rasay, which could be done only on foot, I last night obtained my fellow-traveller's permission to leave him for a day, he being unable to take so hardy a walk. Old Mr Malcolm McCleod, who had obligingly promised to accompany me was at my bedside between five and six. I sprang up immediately, and he and I, attended by two other gentlemen, traversed the country during the whole of this day. Though we had passed over not less than four-and-twenty miles of very rugged ground, and had a Highland dance on the top of Dun Can, the highest mountain in the island, we returned in the evening not at all fatigued, and piqued ourselves at not being outdone at the nightly ball by our less active friends, who had remained at home.

They reckon it rains nine months in the year in this island, owing to its being directly opposite to the western coast of Sky, where the watery clouds are broken by high mountains. The hills here, and indeed all the heathy grounds in general, abound with the sweet-smelling plant which the Highlanders call *gaul*, and (I think) with dwarf juniper in many places. There is enough of turf, which is their fuel, and it is thought there is a mine of coal.

There has been an ancient league between the families of Macdonald and Rasay. Whenever the head of either family dies, his sword is given to the head of the other. The present Rasay has the late Sir James Macdonald's sword. Old Rasay joined the Highland army in 1745, but prudently guarded against a forfeiture, by previously conveying his estate to the present gentleman, his eldest son. On that occasion, Sir Alexander, father of the late Sir James Macdonald, was very friendly to his neighbour. "Don't be afraid, Rasay," said he; "I'll use all my interest to keep you safe; and if your estate should be taken, I'll buy it for the family."—And he would have done it.

Saturday, 11th September

It was a storm of wind and rain; so we could not set out. I wrote some of this Journal, and talked awhile with Dr Johnson in his room, and passed the day, I cannot well say how, but very pleasantly. Dr Johnson was now wishing to move. There was not enough of intellectual entertainment for him, after he had satisfied his curiosity, which he did, by asking questions, till he had exhausted the island; and where there was so numerous a company, mostly young people, there was such a flow of familiar talk, so much noise, and so much singing and dancing, that little opportunity was left for his energetick conversation. He seemed sensible of this; for when I told him how happy they were at having him there, he said, "Yet we have not been able to entertain them much."—I was fretted, from irritability of nerves, by M'Cruslick's too obstreperous mirth. I complained of it to my friend, observing we should be better if he was gone.—"No, sir (said he). He puts something into our society, and takes nothing out of it."—Dr Johnson, however, had several opportunities of instructing the company; but I am sorry to say, that I did not pay sufficient attention to what passed, as his discourse now turned chiefly on mechanicks, agriculture and such subjects, rather than on science and wit.—Last night Lady Rasay shewed him the operation of *wauking* cloth, that is, thickening it in the same manner as is done by a mill. Here it is performed by women, who kneel upon the ground, and rub it with both their hands, singing an Erse song all the time. He was asking questions while they were performing this operation, and, amidst their loud and wild howl, his voice was heard even in the room above.

They dance here every night. The queen of our ball was the eldest Miss Macleod, of Rasay, an elegant well-hred woman, and celebrated for her beauty over all those regions, by the name of Miss Flora Rasay. There seemed to be no jealousy, no discontent among them; and the gaiety of the scene was such, that I for a moment doubted

whether unhappiness had any place in Rasay. But my delusion was soon dispelled, by recollecting the following lines of my fellow-traveller:

"Yet hope not life from pain or danger free,
Or think the doom of man revers'd for thee!"

Sunday, 12th September

It was a beautiful day, and although we did not approve of travelling on Sunday, we resolved to set out, as we were in an island from whence one must take occasion as it serves. We were resolved to pay a visit at Kingsburgh, and see the celebrated Miss Flora Macdonald, who is married to the present Mr Macdonald of Kingsburgh; so took that road, though not so near. All the family, but Lady Rasay, walked down to the shore to see us depart. Rasay himself went with us in a large boat, with eight oars, built in his island; as did Mr Malcolm M'Cleod, Mr Donald M'Queen, Dr Macleod, and some others. We had a most pleasant sail between Rasay and Sky; and passed by a cave, where Martin says fowls were caught by lighting fire in the mouth of it. Malcolm remembers this. But it is not now practised, as few fowls come into it.

We reached the harbour of Portree, in Sky, which is a large and good one. There was lying in it a vessel to carry off the emigrants, called the *Nestor*. We approached her, and she hoisted her colours. Dr Johnson and Mr M'Queen remained in the boat: Rasay and I, and the rest went on board of her. She was a very pretty vessel, and, as we were told, the largest in Clyde. Mr Harrison, the captain, shewed her to us. The cabin was commodious, and even elegant. There was a little library, finely bound. Portree has its name from King James the Fifth having landed there in his tour through the Western Isles, *Ree* in Erse being King, as *Re* is in Italian; so it is *Port-Royal*. There was here a tolerable inn. On our landing, I had the pleasure of finding a letter from home; and there

were also letters to Dr Johnson and me, from Lord Elibank, which had been sent after us from Edinburgh.

At Portree, Mr Donald McQueen went to church and officiated in Erse, and then came to dinner. Dr Johnson and I resolved that we should treat the company, so I played the landlord, or master of the feast, having previously ordered Joseph to pay the bill. We had here a dinner, *et præterea nihil*.* Dr Johnson did not talk. When we were about to depart, we found that Rasay had been beforehand with us, and that all was paid: I would fain have contested this matter with him, but seeing him replied, I declined it. We parted with cordial embraces from him and worthy Malcolm. I feared he would give up Mull and Icolmkill, for he said something of his apprehensions of being detained by bad weather in going to Mull and Iona. However I hoped well. We had a dish of tea at Dr Macleod's, who had a pretty good house, where was his brother, a half-pay officer. His lady was a polite, agreeable woman. Dr Johnson said, he was glad to see that he was so well married, for he had an esteem for physicians. The doctor accompanied us to Kingsburgh, which is called a mile farther; but the computation of Sky has no connection whatever with real distance.

I was highly pleased to see Dr Johnson safely arrived at Kingsburgh, and received by the hospitable Mr Macdonald, who, with a most respectful attention, supported him into the house. Kingsburgh was completely the figure of a gallant Highlander,—exhibiting “the graceful mien and manly looks,” which our popular Scotch song has justly attributed to that character. He had his Tartan plaid thrown about him, a large blue bonnet with a knot of black ribband like a cockade, a brown short coat of a kind of duff,* a Tartan waistcoat with gold buttons and gold button-holes, a bluish philibeg,* and Tartan hose. He had jet-black hair tied behind, and was a large stately man, with a steady sensible countenance.

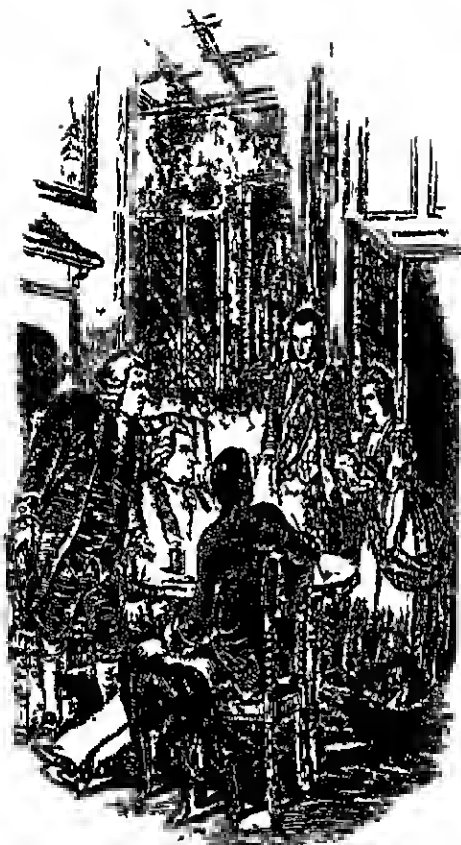
There was a comfortable parlour with a good fire, and a dram went round. By and by supper was served, at which there appeared the lady of the house, the

celebrated Miss Flora Macdonald. She is a little woman, of a genteel appearance, and uncommonly mild and well bred. To see Dr Samuel Johnson, the great champion of the English Tories, salute Miss Flora Macdonald in the isle of Sky, was a striking sight; for though somewhat congenial in their notions, it was very improbable they should meet here.

Miss Flora Macdonald (for so I shall call her) told me, she heard upon the main land, as she was returning home about a fortnight before, that Mr Boswell was coming to Sky, and one Mr Johnson, a young English buck,* with him. He was highly entertained with this fancy. Giving an account of the afternoon which we passed at Anock, he said, "I, being a *buck*, had miss in to make tea."—He was rather quiescent to-night, and went early to bed. I was in a cordial humour, and promoted a cheerful glass. The punch was excellent. Honest Mr M'Queen observed that I was in high glee, "my *governor** being gone to bed." Yet in reality my heart was grieved, when I recollected that Kingsburgh was embarrassed in his affairs, and intended to go to America. However, nothing but what was good was present, and I pleased myself in thinking that so spirited a man would be well every where. I slept in the same room with Dr Johnson. Each had a neat bed, with Tartan curtains, in an upper chamber.

Monday, 13th September

The room where we lay was a celebrated one. Dr Johnson's bed was the very bed in which the grandson of the unfortunate King James the Second lay, on one of the nights after the failure of his rash attempt in 1745-6, while he was eluding the pursuit of the emissaries of government, which had offered thirty thousand pounds as a reward for apprehending him. To see Dr Samuel Johnson lying in that bed, in the isle of Sky, in the house of Miss Flora Macdonald, struck me with such a group of ideas as it is not easy for words to describe, as they



DR JOHNSON AND FLORA MACDONALD
(From Currier's Edition, 1852)

passed through the mind. He smiled, and said, "I have had no ambitious thoughts in it."

At breakfast he said, he would have given a good deal rather than not have lain in that bed. I owned he was the lucky man; and observed, that without doubt it had been contrived between Mrs Macdonald and him. She seemed to acquiesce; adding, "You know young *bucks* are always favourites of the ladies." He spoke of Prince Charles being here, and asked Mrs Macdonald, "*Who* was with him? We were told, madam, in England, there was one Miss Flora Macdonald with him."—She said, "they were very right"; and perceiving Dr Johnson's curiosity, though he had delicacy enough not to question her, very obligingly entertained him with a recital of the particulars which she herself knew of that escape, which does so much honour to the humanity, fidelity, and generosity, of the Highlanders. Dr Johnson listened to her with placid attention, and said, "All this should be written down."

Kingsburgh conducted us in his boat, across one of the lochs, as they call them, or arms of the sea, which flow in upon all the coasts of Sky,—to a mile beyond a place called Grishinish. Our horses had been sent round by land to meet us. By this sail we saved eight miles of bad riding. Dr Johnson said, "When we take into the computation what we have saved, and what we have gained, by this agreeable sail, it is a great deal." He observed, "it is very disagreeable riding in Sky. The way is so narrow, one only at a time can travel, so it is quite unsocial; and you cannot indulge in meditation by yourself, because you must be always attending to the steps which your horse takes."—This was a just and clear description of its inconveniencies.

During our sail, Dr Johnson asked about the use of the dirk, with which he imagined the Highlanders cut their meat. He was told, they had a knife and fork besides, to eat with. He asked, how did the women do? and was answered, some of them had a knife and fork too; but in general the men, when they had cut their meat,

handed their knives and forks to the women, and they themselves eat with their fingers. The old tutor of Macdonald always eat fish with his fingers, alledging that a knife and fork gave it a bad taste. I took the liberty to observe to Dr Johnson, that he did so. "Yes," said he; "but it is because I am short-sighted, and afraid of bones, for which reason I am not fond of eating many kinds of fish, because I must use my fingers."

As soon as we reached the shore, we took leave of Kingsburgh, and mounted our horses. We passed through a wild moor, in many places so soft that we were obliged to walk, which was very fatiguing to Dr Johnson. Once he had advanced on horseback to a very bad step. There was a steep declivity on his left, to which he was so near, that there was not room for him to dismount in the usual way. He tried to alight on the other side, as if he had been a *young buck* indeed, but in the attempt he fell all his length upon the ground; from which, however, he got up immediately without being hurt. During this dreary ride, we were sometimes relieved by a view of branches of the sea, that universal medium of connection amongst mankind. A guide, who had been sent with us from Kingsburgh, explored the way (much in the same manner as, I suppose, is pursued in the wilds of America), by observing certain marks known only to the inhabitants. We arrived at Dunvegan late in the afternoon. The great size of the castle, which is partly old and partly new, and is built upon a rock close to the sea, while the land around it presents nothing but wild, moorish, hilly, and craggy appearances, gave a rude magnificence to the scene. Having dismounted, we ascended a flight of steps, which was made by the late Macleod, for the accommodation of persons coming to him by land, there formerly being, for security, no other access to the castle but from the sea; so that visitors who came by the land were under the necessity of getting into a boat, and sailed round to the only place where it could be approached. We were introduced into a stately dining-room, and received by Lady Macleod, mother of the

Laird, who, with his friend Talisker, having been detained on the road, did not arrive till some time after us.

We found the lady of the house a very polite and sensible woman, who had lived for some time in London, and had there been in Dr Johnson's company. After we had dined, we repaired to the drawing-room, where some of the young ladies of the family, with their mother,



⊙ DUNVEGAN CASTLE

(From Pennant's *A Voyage to the Hebrides*, 1779)

were at tea. Our entertainment here was in so elegant a style, and reminded my fellow-traveller so much of England, that he became quite joyous. He laughed, and said, "Boswell, we came in at the wrong end of this island."—"Sir (said I), it was best to keep this for the last."—He answered, "I would have it both first and last."

Tuesday, 14th September

Dr Johnson said in the morning, "Is not this a fine lady?"—There was not a word now of his "impatience

to be in civilized life";—though indeed I should beg pardon,—he found it here. We had slept well, and lain long. After breakfast we surveyed the castle, and the garden. Mr Bethune, the parish minister, Magnus M'Leod, of Claggan, brother to Talisker, and M'Leod, of Bay, two substantial gentlemen of the clan, dined with us. We had admirable venison, generous wine; in a word, all that a good table has. This was really the hall of a chief.

M'Leod of Ulinish had come in the afternoon. We were a jovial company at supper. The Laird, surrounded by so many of his clan, was to me a pleasing sight. They listened with wonder and pleasure, while Dr Johnson harangued. I am vexed that I cannot take down his full strain of eloquence.

Wednesday, 15th September

The gentlemen of the clan went away early in the morning to the harbour of Lochbradale, to take leave of some of their friends who were going to America. It was a very wet day. We looked at Rorie More's horn, which is a large cow's horn, with the mouth of it ornamented with silver curiously carved. It holds rather more than a bottle and a half. Every Laird of M'Leod, it is said, must, as a proof of his manhood, drink it off full of claret, without laying it down.—From Rorie More many of the branches of the family are descended; in particular, the Talisker branch; so that his name is much talked of. We also saw his bow, which hardly any man now can bend, and his Claymore, which was wielded with both hands, and is of a prodigious size. We saw here some old pieces of iron armour, immensely heavy. The broadsword now used, though called the Claymore (*i.e.* the great sword), is much smaller than that used in Rorie More's time. There is hardly a target now to be found in the Highlands. After the disarming Act, they made them serve as covers to their butter-milk barrels; a kind of change, like heating spears into pruning-hooks.

Thursday, 16th September

Last night much care was taken of Dr Johnson, who was still distressed by his cold. He had hitherto most strangely slept without a night-cap. Miss M'Leod made him a large flannel one, and he was prevailed with to drink a little brandy when he was going to bed. He has great virtue, in not drinking wine or any fermented liquor, because, as he acknowledged to us, he could not do it in moderation.—Lady M'Leod would hardly believe him, and said, "I am sure, sir, you would not carry it too far." —JOHNSON. "Nay, madam, it carried me. I took the opportunity of a long illness to leave it off. It was then prescribed to me not to drink wine; and having broken off the habit, I have never returned to it."

I was elated by the thought of having been able to entice such a man to this remote part of the world. A ludicrous, yet just image presented itself to my mind, which I expressed to the company. I compared myself to a dog who has got hold of a large piece of meat, and runs away with it to a corner, where he may devour it in peace, without any fear of others taking it from him. "In London, Reynolds, Beauclerk, and all of them, are contending who shall enjoy Dr Johnson's conversation. We are feasting upon it, undisturbed, at Dunvegan."

It was still a storm of wind and rain. Dr Johnson however walked out with M'Leod, and saw Rorie More's cascade in full perfection.

Friday, 17th September

The weather this day was rather better than any that we had since we came to Dunvegan. It was wonderful how well time passed in a remote castle, and in dreary weather. After supper, we talked of Pennant. It was objected that he was superficial. Dr Johnson defended him warmly. He said, "Pennant has greater variety of enquiry than almost any man, and has told us more than perhaps one in ten thousand could have done, in the time that he took. He has not said what he was to tell; so

you cannot find fault with him, for what he has not told: If a man comes to look for fishes, you cannot blame him if he does not attend to fowls."

Saturday, 18th September

Before breakfast, Dr Johnson came up to my room, to forbid me to mention that this was his birth-day; but I told him I had done it already; at which he was displeased; I suppose from wishing to have nothing particular done on his account. Lady M'Leod and I got into a warm dispute. She wanted to build a house upon a farm which she has taken, about five miles from the castle, and to make gardens and other ornaments there; all of which I approved of; but insisted that the seat of the family should always be upon the rock of Dunvegan. —JOHNSON. "Ay, in time we'll build all round this rock. You may make a very good house at the farm; but it must not be such as to tempt the Laird of M'Leod to go thither to reside. Most of the great families of England have a secondary residence, which is called a jointure-house: let the new house be of that kind."—The lady insisted that the rock was very inconvenient; that there was no place near it where a good garden could be made; that it must always be a rude place; that it was a Herculean labour to make a dinner here.—I was vexed to find the alloy of modern refinement in a lady who had so much old family spirit.—"Madam (said I), if once you quit this rock, there is no knowing where you may settle. You move five miles first;—then to St Andrews, as the late Laird did;—then to Edinburgh;—and so on till you end at Hampstead, or in France. No, no; keep to the rock: it is the very jewel of the estate. It looks as if it had been let down from heaven by the four corners, to be the residence of a Chief. Have all the comforts and conveniences of life upon it, but never leave Rorie More's cascade."—"But (said she) is it not enough if we keep it? Must we never have more convenience than Rorie More had? he had his beef brought to dinner in one basket, and his bread in another. Why not as well be Rorie More all

over, as live upon his rock? And should not we tire, in looking perpetually on this rock? It is very well for you, who have a fine place, and every thing easy, to talk thus, and think of chaining honest folks to a rock. You would not live upon it yourself."—"Yes, madam (said I), I would live upon it, were I Laird of M'Leod, and should be unhappy if I were not upon it."—JOHNSON (with a strong voice, and most determined manner). "Madam, rather than quit the old rock, Boswell would live in the pit; he would make his bed in the dungeon."—I felt a degree of elation, at finding my resolute feudal enthusiasm thus confirmed by such a sanction. The lady was puzzled a little. She still returned to her pretty farm,—rich ground,—fine garden.—"Madam (said Dr Johnson), were they in Asia, I would not leave the rock."—My opinion on this subject is still the same. An ancient family residence ought to be a primary object; and though the situation of Dunvegan be such that little can be done here in gardening, or pleasure-ground, yet, in addition to the veneration acquired by the lapse of time, it has many circumstances of natural grandeur, suited to the seat of a Highland Chief: it has the sea,—islands,—rocks,—hills,—a noble cascade; and when the family is again in opulence, something may be done by art.

A young gentleman of the name of M'Lean, nephew to the Laird of the isle of Muck, came this morning; and, just as we sat down to dinner, came the Laird of the Isle of Muck himself, his lady, sister to Talisker, two other ladies their relations, and a daughter of the late M'Leod of Harmer, who wrote a treatise on the second sight, under the designation of *Theophilus Insulanus*. It was somewhat droll to hear this Laird called by his title. *Muck* would have sounded ill; so he was called *Isle of Muck*, which went off with great readiness. The name, as now written, is unseemly, but is not so bad in the original Erse, which is *Monach*, signifying the Sows' Island. Buchanan calls it *Insula Porcorum*. It is so called from its form. Some call it *Isle of Monk*. The Laird insists that this is the proper name. It was formerly church-

land belonging to Icolmkill, and a hermit lived in it. It is two miles long, and about three quarters of a mile broad. The Laird said, he had seven score of souls upon it. Last year he had eighty persons inoculated, mostly children, but some of them eighteen years of age. He agreed with the surgeon to come and do it, at half a crown a head.—It is very fertile in corn, of which they export some; and its coasts abound in fish. A taylor comes there six times in a year. They get a good blacksmith from the isle of Egg.

Sunday, 19th September

It was rather worse weather than any that we had yet. He came to my room this morning before breakfast, to read my Journal, which he has done all along. He often before said, "I take great delight in reading it." To-day he said, "You improve: it grows better and better."—I observed, there was a danger of my getting a habit of writing in a slovenly manner.—"Sir," said he, "it is not written in a slovenly manner. It might be printed, were the subject fit for printing."

After dinner to-day, we talked of the extraordinary fact of Lady Grange's* being sent to St Kilda, and confined there for several years, without any means of relief. Dr Johnson said, if M'Leod would let it be known that he had such a place for naughty ladies, he might make it a very profitable island.

Monday, 20th September

When I awaked, the storm was higher still. It abated about nine, and the sun shone; but it rained again very soon, and it was not a day for travelling. At breakfast Dr Johnson was very severe on a lady, whose name was mentioned. He said, he would have sent her to St Kilda. That she was as bad as negative badness could be, and stood in the way of what was good: that insipid beauty would not go a great way; and that such a woman might be cut out of a cabbage, if there was a skilful artificer.

M'Leod was too late in coming to breakfast. Dr Johnson said, laziness was worse than the toothache.—
 BOSWELL. "I cannot agree with you, sir; a bason of cold water, or a horse whip, will cure laziness."—JOHNSON. "No, sir; it will only put off the fit; it will not cure the disease. I have been trying to cure my laziness all my life, and could not do it."—BOSWELL. "But if a man does in a shorter time what might be the labour of a life, there is nothing to be said against him."—JOHNSON (perceiving at once that I alluded to him and his *Dictionary*). "Suppose that flattery to be true, the consequence would be, that the world would have no right to censure a man; but that will not justify him to himself."

Tuesday, 21st September

The uncertainty of our present situation having prevented me from receiving any letters from home for some time, I could not help being uneasy. Dr Johnson had an advantage over me, in this respect, he having no wife or child to occasion anxious apprehensions in his mind.—It was a good morning; so we resolved to set out. M'Leod and Talisker accompanied us. We passed by the parish church of Durinish. The church-yard is not enclosed, but a pretty murmuring brook runs along one side of it. In it is a pyramid erected to the memory of Thomas Lord Lovat, by his son Lord Simon, who suffered on Tower-hill. It is of freestone, and, I suppose, about thirty feet high. There is an inscription on a piece of white marble inserted in it, which I suspect to have been the composition of Lord Lovat himself, being much in his pompous style.

I have preserved this inscription, though of no great value, thinking it characteristic of a man who has made some noise in the world. Dr Johnson said, it was poor stuff, such as Lord Lovat's butler might have written.

I observed to-day, that the common way of carrying home their grain here is in loads on horseback. They have also a few sleds, or *cars*, as we call them in Ayrshire, clumsily made, and rarely used.

We got to Ulinish about six o'clock, and found a very

good farm-house, of two stories. Mr M'Leod of Ulinish, the sheriff-substitute of the island, was a plain honest gentleman, a good deal like an English justice of peace; not much given to talk, but sufficiently sagacious, and somewhat droll. His daughter, though she was never out of Sky, was a very well-bred woman.—Our reverend friend, Mr Donald M'Queen, kept his appointment, and met us here.

Wednesday, 22nd September

In the morning I walked out, and saw a ship, the *Margaret* of Clyde, pass by with a number of emigrants on board. It was a melancholy sight.

From an old tower, near this place, is an extensive view of Loch Braccadil, and, at a distance, of the isles of Barra and South Uist; and on the land-side, the Cuillin, a prodigious range of mountains, capped with rocky pinnacles in a strange variety of shapes. They resemble the mountains near Corté in Corsica, of which there is a very good print. They make part of a great range for deer, which, though entirely devoid of trees, is in these countries called a *forest*.

There is a plentiful garden at Ulinish (a great rarity in Sky), and several trees; and near the house is a hill, which has an Erse name, signifying "the hill of strife," where, Mr M'Queen informed us, justice was of old administered. It is like the *mons placiti* of Scone, or those hills which are called *laws*, such as Kelly Law, North Berwick Law, and several others. It is singular that this spot should happen now to be the sheriff's residence.

Thursday, 23rd September

There is a beautiful little island in the Loch of Dunvegan, called Isa. M'Leod said, he would give it to Dr Johnson, on condition of his residing on it three months in the year; nay one month. Dr Johnson was highly amused with the fancy. I have seen him please himself with little things, even with mere ideas

like the present. He talked a great deal of this island;—how he would build a house there,—how he would fortify it,—how he would cannon,—how he would plant,—how he would sail out, and *take* the isle of Muck;—and then he laughed with uncommon glee, and could hardly leave off. I have seen him do so at a small matter that struck him, and was a sport to no one else. Mr Langton told me, that one night he did so while the company were all grave about him:—only Garrick, in his significant smart manner darting his eyes around, exclaimed, "*Very* jocose, to be sure!"—M'Leod encouraged the fancy of Dr Johnson's becoming owner of an island; told him, that it was the practice in this country to name every man by his lands; and begged leave to drink to him in that mode: "Island Isa, your health!"—Ulinish, Talisker, Mr M'Queen, and I, all joined in our different manners, while Dr Johnson bowed to each, with much good humour.

We had good weather, and a fine sail this day. The shore was varied with hills and rocks, and corn-fields, and bushes, which are here dignified with the name of natural *wood*. We landed near the house of Ferneley, a farm possessed by another gentleman of the name of M'Leod, who, expecting our arrival, was waiting on the shore, with a horse for Dr Johnson. The rest of us walked.—At dinner, I expressed to M'Leod the joy which I had in seeing him on such cordial terms with his clan. "Government (said he) has deprived us of our ancient power; but it cannot deprive us of our domestick satisfactions. I would rather drink punch in one of their houses (meaning the houses of his people) than be enabled by their hardships to have claret in my own."—This should be the sentiment of every Chieftain. All that he can get by raising his rents, is more luxury in his own house. Is it not better to share the profits of his estate, to a certain degree, with his kinsmen, and thus have both social intercourse and patriarchal influence?

We had a very good ride, for about three miles, to

Talisker, where Colonel M'Leod introduced us to his lady. We found here Mr Donald M'Lean, the young Laird of Col (nephew to Talisker), to whom I delivered the letter with which I had been favoured by his uncle, Professor M'Leod, at Aberdeen. He was a little lively young man. We found he had been a good deal in England, studying farming, and was resolved to improve



WOMEN AT THE QUERN AND THE LUACHAD—TALISKER
IN THE BACKGROUND

(From Pennant's "A Voyage to the Hebrides," 1779)

the value of his father's lands, without oppressing his tenants, or losing the ancient Highland fashions.

Talisker is a better place than one commonly finds in Sky. It is situated in a rich bottom. Before it is a wide expanse of sea, on each hand of which are immense rocks; and, at some distance in the sea, there are three columnal rocks rising to sharp points. The billows break with prodigious force and noise on the coast of Talisker. There are here a good many well-grown trees. Talisker is an extensive farm. The possessor of it has, for several

generations, been the next heir to M'Leod, as there has been but one son always in that family. The court before the house is most injudiciously paved with the round blueish-grey pebbles which are found upon the sea-shore; so that you walk as if upon cannon-balls driven into the ground.

Friday, 24th September

This was a good day. Dr Johnson told us, at breakfast, that he rode harder at a fox chase than any body. "The English (said he) are the only nation who ride hard a-hunting. A Frenchman goes out upon a managed horse, and capers in the field, and no more thinks of leaping a hedge than of mounting a breach. Lord Powerscourt laid a wager, in France, that he would ride a great many miles in a certain short time. The French academicians set to work, and calculated that, from the resistance of the air, it was impossible. His lordship however performed it."

Our money being nearly exhausted, we sent a bill for thirty pounds, drawn on Sir William Forbes and Co. to Lochbraccadale, but our messenger found it very difficult to procure cash for it; at length, however, he got us value from the master of a vessel which was to carry away some emigrants. There is a great scarcity of specie in Sky. Mr M'Queen said he had the utmost difficulty to pay his servants' wages, or to pay for any little thing which he has to buy. The rents are paid in bills, which the drovers give. The people consume a vast deal of snuff and tobacco, for which they must pay ready money; and pedlers, who come about selling goods, as there is not a shop in the island, carry away the cash. If there were encouragement given to fisheries and manufacturers, there might be a circulation of money introduced. I got one-and-twenty shillings in silver at Portree, which was thought a wonderful store.

Talisker, Mr M'Queen, and I, walked out, and looked at no less than fifteen different waterfalls near the house, in the space of about a quarter of a mile. We also saw

Cuchillin's well, said to have been the favourite spring of that ancient hero. I drank of it. The water is admirable. On the shore are many stones full of crystallizations in the heart.

Though our obliging friend, Mr M'Lean, was but the young laird, he had the title of Col constantly given him. After dinner he and I walked to the top of Prieswell, a very high rocky hill, from whence there is a view of Barra,—the Long Island,—Bernera,—the Loch of Dunvegan,—part of Rum—part of Rasay, and a vast deal of the Isle of Sky. Col, though he had come into Sky with an intention to be at Dunvegan, and pass a considerable time in the island, most politely resolved first to conduct us to Mull, and then to return to Sky. This was a very fortunate circumstance; for he planned an expedition for us of more variety than merely going to Mull. He proposed we should see the islands of Egg, Muck, Col, and Tyr-yi. In all these islands he could shew us every thing worth seeing; and in Mull he said he should be as if at home, his father having lands there, and he a farm.

Saturday, 25th September

It was resolved that we should set out, in order to return to Slate, to be in readiness to take boat whenever there should be a fair wind. Dr Johnson remained in his chamber writing a letter, and it was long before we could get him into motion. He did not come to breakfast, but had it sent to him. When he had finished his letter, it was twelve o'clock, and we should have set out at ten. When I went up to him, he said to me, "Do you remember a song which begins:

"Every island is a prison
Strongly guarded by the sea;
King and princes, for that reason,
Prisoners are, as well as we."

I suppose he had been thinking of our confined situation. He would fain have gone in a boat from hence, instead

of riding back to Slate. A scheme for it was proposed. He said, "We'll not be driven tamely from it":—but it proved impracticable.

We took leave of M'Leod and Talisker, from whom we parted with regret. Talisker, having been bred to physick, had a tincture of scholarship in his conversation, which pleased Dr Johnson, and he had some very good books; and being a colonel in the Dutch service, he and his lady, in consequence of having lived abroad, had introduced the ease and politeness of the Continent into this rude region.

Young Col was now our leader. Mr M'Queen was to accompany us half a day more. We stopped at a little hut, where we saw an old woman grinding with the *quern*, the ancient Highland instrument, which it is said was used by the Romans, but which, being very slow in its operation, is almost entirely gone into disuse.

The walls of the cottages in Sky, instead of being one compacted mass of stones, are often formed by two exterior surfaces of stone, filled up with earth in the middle, which makes them very warm. The roof is generally bad. They are thatched, sometimes with straw, sometimes with heath, sometimes with fern. The thatch is secured by ropes of straw, or of heath; and, to fix the ropes, there is a stone tied to the end of each. These stones hang round the bottom of the roof, and make it look like a lady's hair in papers; but I should think that, when there is wind, they would come down, and knock people on the head.

We dined at the inn at Sconser, where I had the pleasure to find a letter from my wife. Here we parted from our learned companion, Mr Donald M'Queen. Dr Johnson took leave of him very affectionately, saying, "Dear sir, do not forget me!"—We settled, that he should write an account of the Isle of Sky, which Dr Johnson promised to revise. He said, Mr M'Queen should tell all that he could; distinguishing what he himself knew, what was traditional, and what conjectural.

We sent our horses round a point of land, that we might shun some very bad road; and resolved to go forward by sea. It was seven o'clock when we got into

our boat. We had many showers, and it soon grew pretty dark. Dr Johnson sat silent and patient. Once he said, as he looked on the black coast of Sky—black, as being composed of rocks seen in the dusk,—“This is very solemn.” Our boatmen were rude singers, and seemed so like wild Indians, that a very little imagination was necessary to give one an impression of being upon an American river. We landed at Strolimus, from whence we got a guide to walk before us, for two miles, to Corrichatachin. Not being able to procure a horse for our baggage, I took one portmanteau before me, and Joseph another. We had but a single star to light us on our way. It was about eleven when we arrived. We were most hospitably received by the master and mistress, who were just going to bed, but, with unaffected ready kindness, made a good fire, and at twelve o'clock at night had supper on the table.

Dr Johnson went to bed soon. When one bowl of punch was finished, I rose, and was near the door, in my way up stairs to bed; but Corrichatachin said, it was the first time Col had been in his house, and he should have his bowl;—and would not I join in drinking it? The heartiness of my honest landlord, and the desire of doing social honour to our very obliging conductor, induced me to sit down again. Col's bowl was finished; and by that time we were well warmed. A third bowl was soon made, and that too was finished. We were cordial, and merry to a high degree; but of what passed I have no recollection, with any accuracy. I remember calling Corrichatachin by the familiar appellation of Corri, which his friends do. A fourth bowl was made, by which time Col, and young McKinnon, Corrichatachin's son, slipped away to bed. I continued a little with Corri and Knockow; but at last I left them. It was near five in the morning when I got to bed.

Sunday, 26th September

I awaked at noon, with a severe headache. I was much vexed that I should have been guilty of such a riot, and

afraid of a reproof from Dr Johnson. I thought it very inconsistent with that conduct which I ought to maintain, while the companion of the Rambler. About one he came into my room, and accosted me, "What, drunk yet?"—His tone of voice was not that of severe upbraiding; so I was relieved a little.—"Sir (said I), they kept me up."—He answered, "No, you kept them up, you drunken dog."—This he said with good-humoured *English* pleasantry. Soon afterwards, Corrichatachin, Col, and other friends assembled round my bed. *Corri* had a brandy-bottle and glass with him, and insisted I should take a dram.—"Ay (said Dr Johnson), fill him drunk again. Do it in the morning, that we may laugh at him all day. It is a poor thing for a fellow to get drunk at night, and skulk to bed, and let his friends have no sport"—Finding him thus jocular, I became quite easy; and when I offered to get up, he very good-naturedly said, "You need be in no such hurry now."—I took my host's advice, and drank some brandy, which I found an effectual cure for my headache. When I rose, I went into Dr Johnson's room, and taking up Mrs M'Kinnon's Prayer-book, I opened it at the twentieth Sunday after Trinity, in the epistle for which I read, "And be not drunk with wine, wherein there is excess." Some would have taken this as a divine interposition.

This was another day of wind and rain; but good cheer and good society helped to beguile the time. I felt myself comfortable enough in the afternoon. I then thought that my last night's riot was no more than such a social excess as may happen without much moral blame; and recollected that some physicians maintained, that a fever produced by it was, upon the whole, good for health: so different are our reflections on the same subject, at different periods; and such the excuses with which we palliate what we know to be wrong.

Monday, 27th September

Mr Donald M'Leod, our original guide, who had parted from us at Dunvegan, joined us again to-day. The

weather was still so bad that we could not travel. I found a closet here, with a good many books, beside those that were lying about. Dr Johnson told me, he found a library in his room at Talisker; and observed, that it was one of the remarkable things of Sky, that there were so many books in it.

Though we had here great abundance of provisions, it is remarkable that Corrichatachin has literally no garden; not even a turnip, a carrot or a cabbage.—He was quite social and easy amongst them; and, though he drank no fermented liquor, toasted Highland beauties with great readiness. His conviviality engaged them so much, that they seemed eager to show their attention to him, and vied with each other in crying out, with a strong Celtick pronunciation, "Toctor Shonson, Toctor Shonson, your health!"

This evening one of our married ladies, a lively pretty little woman, good-humouredly sat down upon Dr Johnson's knee, and, being encouraged by some of the company, put her hands round his neck, and kissed him.—"Do it again (said he), and let us see who will tire first."—He kept her on his knee some time, while he and she drank tea. He was now like a *duck* indeed. All the company were much entertained to find him so easy and pleasant. To me it was highly comick, to see the grave philosopher,—the Rambler,—toying with a Highland beauty!—But what could he do? He must have been surly, and weak too, had he not behaved as he did. He would have been laughed at, and not more respected, though less loved.

He read to-night, to himself, as he sat in company, a great deal of my Journal, and said to me, "The more I read of this, I think the more highly of you."

Tuesday, 28th September

The weather was worse than yesterday. I felt as if imprisoned. Dr Johnson said, it was irksome to be detained thus: yet he seemed to have less uneasiness, or more patience, than I had. What made our situation

worse here was, that we had no rooms that we could command; for the good people had no notion that a man could have any occasion but for a mere sleeping-place; so, during the day, the bed chambers were common to all the house. Servants eat in Dr Johnson's; and mine was a kind of general rendezvous of all under the roof, children and dogs not excepted. As the gentlemen occupied the parlour, the ladies had no place to sit in, during the day, but Dr Johnson's room. I had always some quiet time for writing in it, before he was up; and, by degrees, I accustomed the ladies to let me sit in it after breakfast, at my Journal, without minding me.

Dr Johnson was this morning for going to see as many islands as we could; not recollecting the uncertainty of the season, which might detain us in one place for many weeks. He said to me, "I have more the spirit of adventure than you."—For my part, I was anxious to get to Mull, from whence we might almost any day reach the main land.

Happily the weather cleared up between one and two o'clock, and we got ready to depart; but our kind host and hostess would not let us go without taking a *snatch*, as they called it; which was in truth a very good dinner. While the punch went round, Dr Johnson kept a close whispering conference with Mrs M'Kinnon, which, however, was loud enough to let us hear that the subject of it was the particulars of Prince Charles's escape. The company were entertained and pleased to observe it. Upon that subject, there was something congenial between the soul of Dr Samuel Johnson, and that of an isle of Sky farmer's wife. It is curious to see people, how far soever removed from each other in the general system of their lives, come close together on a particular point which is common to each. We were merry with Corricatachin, on Dr Johnson's whispering with his wife. She, perceiving this, humourously cried, "I am in love with him. What is it to live and not to love?" Upon her saying something, which I did not hear, or cannot recollect, he seized her hand eagerly, and kissed it

As we were going, the Scottish phrase of "*honest man!*" which is an expression of kindness and regard, was again and again applied by the company to Dr Johnson. I was also treated with much civility; and I must take some merit from my assiduous attention to him, and from my contriving that he shall be easy wherever he goes, that he shall not be asked twice to eat or drink any thing (which always disgusts him), that he shall be provided with water at his meals, and many such little things, which if not attended to would fret him.

We set out about four. Young Corrichatachin went with us. We had a fine evening, and arrived in good time at Ostig, the residence of Mr Martin M'Pherson, minister of Slate. It is a pretty good house, built by his father, upon a farm near the church. We were received here with much kindness by Mr and Mrs M'Pherson, and his sister, Miss M'Pherson, who pleased Dr Johnson much, by singing Erse songs, and playing on the guitar. He afterwards sent her a present of his *Rasselas*.

Wednesday, 29th September

After a very good sleep, I rose more refreshed than I had been for some nights. We were now at but a little distance from the shore, and saw the sea from our windows, which made our voyage seem nearer. Mr M'Pherson's manners and address pleased us much. He appeared to be a man of such intelligence and taste as to be sensible of the extraordinary powers of his illustrious guest. He said to me, "Dr Johnson is an honour to mankind; and, if the expression may be used, is an honour to religion."

Col, who had gone yesterday to pay a visit at Camus-cross, joined us this morning at breakfast. Some other gentlemen also came to enjoy the entertainment of Dr Johnson's conversation.—The day was windy and rainy, so that we had just seized a happy interval for our journey last night. We had good entertainment here, better

accommodation than at Corrichatachin, and time enough to ourselves. The hours slipped along imperceptibly.

I was unfortunate enough, simply perhaps, but I could not help thinking, undeservedly, to come within "the whiff and wind of his fell sword." I asked him, if he had ever been accustomed to wear a night-cap. He said "No." I asked, if it was best not to wear one.—JOHNSON. "Sir, I had this custom by chance, and perhaps no man shall ever know whether it is best to sleep with or without a night-cap."—Soon afterwards he was laughing at some deficiency in the Highlands, and said, "One might as well go without shoes and stockings."—Thinking to have a little hit at his own deficiency, I ventured to add,—“or without a night-cap, sir.” But I had better have been silent; for he retorted directly, "I do not see the connection there (laughing). Nobody before was ever foolish enough to ask whether it was best to wear a night-cap or not. This comes of being a little wrong-headed."—He carried the company along with him; and yet the truth is, that if he had always worn a night-cap, as is the common practice, and found the Highlanders did not wear one, he would have wondered at their harshness; so that my hit was fair enough.

Thursday, 30th September

There was as great a storm of wind and rain as I have almost ever seen, which necessarily confined us to the house; but we were fully compensated by Dr Johnson's conversation.

There was something not quite serene in his humour to-night, after supper; for he spoke of hastening away to London, without stopping much at Edinburgh. I reminded him, that he had General Oughton and many others to see.—JOHNSON. "Nay, I shall neither go in jest, nor stay in jest. I shall do what is fit."—BOSWELL. "Ay, sir, but all I desire is, that you will let me tell you when it is fit."—JOHNSON. "Sir, I shall not consult you."—BOSWELL. "If you are to run away from us,

as soon as you get loose, we will keep you confined in an island."—He was, however, on the whole, very good company. Mr Donald M'Leod expressed very well the gradual impression made by Dr Johnson on those who are so fortunate as to obtain his acquaintance. "When you see him first, you are struck with awful reverence;—then you admire him;—and then you love him cordially."

Friday, 1st October

I shewed to Dr Johnson verses in a magazine, on his *Dictionary*, composed of uncommon words taken from it :

" Little of *Anthropopathy* has he," &c.

He read a few of them, and said, "I am not answerable for all the words in my *Dictionary*."—I told him, that Garrick kept a book of all who had either praised, or abused him.—On the subject of his own reputation, he said, "Now that I see it has been so current a topick, I wish I had done so too; but it could not well be done now, as so many things are scattered in newspapers."

The weather being now somewhat better, Mr James M'Donald, factor to Sir Alexander M'Donald in Slate, insisted that all the company at Ostig should go to the house at Armidale, which Sir Alexander had left, having gone with his lady to Edinburgh, and be his guests, till we had an opportunity of sailing to Mull. We accordingly got there to dinner; and passed our day very cheerfully, being no less than fourteen in number.

Saturday, 2nd October

Dr Johnson said, that "a Chief and his Lady should make their house like a court. They should have a certain number of the gentlemen's daughters to receive their education in the family, to learn pastry and such things from the housekeeper, and manners from my lady. That was the way in the great families in Wales; at Lady Salisbury's, Mrs Thrale's grandmother's, and at Lady

Philips's. I distinguish the families by the ladies, as I speak of what was properly their province. There were always six young ladies at Sir John Philips's: when one was married, her place was filled up. There was a large school-room, where they learnt needle-work and other things."

We were very social and merry in his room this forenoon. In the evening the company danced as usual. We performed, with much activity, a dance which, I suppose, the emigration from Sky has occasioned. They call it *America*. Each of the couples, after the common *involutions* and *evolutions*, successively whirls round in a circle, till all are in motion; and the dance seems intended to show how emigration catches, till a whole neighbourhood is set afloat.—Mrs M'Kinnon told me, that last year when a ship sailed from Portree for America, the people on shore were almost distracted when they saw their relations go off; they lay down on the ground, tumbled, and tore the grass with their teeth.—This year there was not a tear shed. The people on shore seemed to think that they would soon follow. This indifference is a mortal sign for the country.

We danced to-night to the musick of the hagpipe, which made us beat the ground with prodigious force. I thought it better to endeavour to concillate the kindness of the people of Sky, by joining heartily in their amusements, than to play the abstract scholar. I looked on this Tour to the Hebrides as a copartnership between Dr Johnson and me. Each was to do all he could to promote its success; and I have some reason to flatter myself, that my gayer exertions were of service to us. Dr Johnson's immense fund of knowledge and wit was a wonderful source of admiration and delight to them; but they had it only at times; and they required to have the intervals agreeably filled up, and even little elucidations of his learned text. I was also fortunate enough frequently to draw him forth to talk, when he would otherwise have been silent. The fountain was at times locked up, till I opened the spring.—It was curious to

hear the Hebridians, when any dispute happened while he was out of the room, saying, "Stay till Dr Johnson comes: say that to *him*!"

Yesterday Dr Johnson said, "I cannot but laugh, to think of myself roving among the Hebrides at sixty. I wonder where I shall rove at fourscore!"—This evening he disputed the truth of what is said, as to the people of St Kilda catching cold whenever strangers come. "How can there (said he) be a physical effect without a physical cause?"—He added, laughing, "the arrival of a ship full of strangers would kill them; for, if one stranger gives them one cold, two strangers must give them two colds; and so in proportion."—I wondered to hear him ridicule this, as he had praised M'Aulay for putting it in his book: saying, that it was manly in him to tell a fact, however strange, if he himself believed it. He said, the evidence was not adequate to the improbability of the thing; that if a physician, rather disposed to be incredulous, should go to St Kilda, and report the fact, then he would begin to look about him. They said, it was annually proved by M'Leod's steward, on whose arrival all the inhabitants caught cold. He jocularly remarked, "the steward always comes to demand something from them; and so they fall a coughing. I suppose the people in Sky all take a cold, when — (naming a certain person) comes."—They said, he came only in summer.—JOHNSON. "That is out of tenderness to you. Bad weather and he, at the same time, would be too much."

Sunday, 3rd October

Joseph reported that the wind was still against us. Dr Johnson said, "A wind, or not a wind? that is the question"; for he can amuse himself at times with a little play of words, or rather sentences.

While we were chatting in the indolent stile of men who were to stay here all this day at least, we were suddenly roused at being told that the wind was fair, that a little fleet of herring-busses was passing by for

Mull, and that Mr Simpson's vessel was about to sail. Hugh M'Donald, the skipper, came to us, and was impatient that we should get ready, which we soon did. Dr Johnson, with composure and solemnity, repeated the observation of Epictetus,* that, "as man has the voyage of death before him,—whatever may be his employment, he should be ready at the master's call; and an old man should never be far from the shore, lest he should not be able to get himself ready." He rode, and I and the other gentlemen walked, about an English mile to the shore, where the vessel lay. Dr Johnson said, he should never forget Sky, and returned thanks for all civilities. We were carried to the vessel in a small boat which she had, and we set sail very briskly about one o'clock. I was much pleased with the motion for many hours. Dr Johnson grew sick, and retired under cover, as it rained a good deal. I kept above, that I might have fresh air, and finding myself not affected by the motion of the vessel, I exulted in being a stout seaman, while Dr Johnson was quite in a state of annihilation. But I was soon humbled; for after imagining that I could go with ease to America or the East Indies, I became very sick, but kept above board, though it rained hard.

As we had been detained so long in Sky by bad weather, we gave up the scheme that Col had planned for us of visiting several islands, and contented ourselves with the prospect of seeing Mull, and Icolmkill and Incbkenneth, which lie near to it.

Mr Simpson was sanguine in his hopes for a while, the wind being fair for us. He said, he would land us at Icolmkill that night. But when the wind failed, it was resolved we should make for the sound of Mull, and land in the harbour of Tobermorie. We kept near the five herring vessels for some time; but afterwards four of them got before us, and one little wherry fell behind us. When we got in full view of the point of Ardnamurchan, the wind changed, and was directly against our getting into the sound. We were then

obliged to tack, and get forward in that tedious manner. As we advanced, the storm grew greater, and the sea very rough. Col then began to talk of making for Egg, or Canna, or his own island. Our skipper said, he would get us into the Sound. Having struggled for this a good while in vain, he said, he would push forward till we were near the land of Mull, where we might cast anchor, and lie till the morning; for although, before this, there had been a good moon, and I had pretty distinctly seen not only the land of Mull, but up the Sound, and the country of Morven as at one end of it, the night was now grown very dark. Our crew consisted of one M'Donald, our skipper, and two sailors, one of whom had but one eye; Mr Simpson himself, Col, and Hugh M'Donald his servant, all helped. Simpson said, he would willingly go for Col, if young Col or his servant would undertake to pilot us to a harbour; but, as the island is low land, it was dangerous to run upon it in the dark. Col and his servant appeared a little dubious. The scheme of running for Canna seemed then to be embraced; but Canna was ten leagues off, all out of our way; and they were afraid to attempt the harbour of Egg. All these different plans were successively in agitation. The old skipper still tried to make for the land of Mull; but then it was considered that there was no place there where we could anchor in safety. Much time was lost in striving against the storm. At last it became so rough, and threatened to be so much worse, that Col and his servant took more courage, and said they would undertake to hit one of the harbours in Col. —"Then let us run for it in GOD's name," said the skipper; and instantly we turned towards it. The little wherry which had fallen behind us, had hard work. The master begged that, if we made for Col, we should put out a light to him. Accordingly one of the sailors waved a glowing peat for some time. The various difficulties that were started, gave me a good deal of apprehension, from which I was relieved, when I found

we were to run for a harbour before the wind. But my relief was but of short duration; for I soon heard that our sails were very bad, and were in danger of being torn in pieces, in which case we should be driven upon the rocky shore of Col. It was very dark, and there was a heavy and incessant rain. The sparks of the burning peat flew so much about, that I dreaded the vessel might take fire. Then, as Col was a sportsman, and had powder on board, I figured that we might be blown up. Simpson and he appeared a little frightened, which made me more so; and the perpetual talking, or rather shouting, which was carried on in Erse, alarmed me still more. A man is always suspicious of what is saying in an unknown tongue; and, if fear be his passion at the time, he grows more afraid. Our vessel often lay so much on one side, that I trembled lest she should be overset, and indeed they told me afterwards, that they had run her sometimes to within an inch of the water, so anxious were they to make what haste they could before the night should be worse. I now saw what I never saw before, a prodigious sea, with immense billows coming upon a vessel, so as that it seemed hardly possible to escape. There was something grandly horrible in the sight. I am glad I have seen it once. Amidst all these terrifying circumstances, I endeavoured to compose my mind. It was not easy to do it; for all the stories that I had heard of the dangerous sailing among the Hebrides, which is proverbial, came full upon my recollection. When I thought of those who were dearest to me, and would suffer severely, should I be lost, I upbraided myself, as not having a sufficient cause for putting myself in such danger.

It was half an hour after eleven before we set ourselves in the course for Col. As I saw them all busy doing something, I asked Col, with much earnestness, what I could do. He, with a happy readiness, put into my hand a rope, which was fixed to the top of one of the masts, and told me to hold it till he bade me

pull. If I had considered the matter, I might have seen that this could not be of the least service; but his object was to keep me out of the way of those who were busy working the vessel, and at the same time to divert my fear, by employing me, and making me think that I was of use. Thus did I stand firm to my post, while the wind and rain beat upon me, always expecting a call to pull my rope.

The man with one eye steered; old M'Donald, and Col and his servant, lay upon the fore-castle, looking sharp out for the harbour. It was necessary to carry much *cloth*, as they termed it, that is to say, much sail, in order to keep the vessel off the shore of Col. This made violent plunging in a rough sea. At last they spied the harbour of Lochiern, and Col cried, "Thank GOD, we are safe!" We ran up till we were opposite to it, and soon afterwards we got into it, and cast anchor.

Dr Johnson had all this time been quiet and unconcerned. He had lain down on one of the beds, and having got free from sickness, was satisfied. The truth is, he knew nothing of the danger we were in.

There was in the harbour, before us, a Campbell-town vessel, the *Betty*, Kenneth Morison master, taking in kelp, and bound for Ireland. We sent our boat to beg beds for two gentlemen, and that the master would send his boat, which was larger than ours. He accordingly did so, and Col and I were accommodated in his vessel till the morning.

Monday, 4th October

About eight o'clock we went in the boat to Mr Simpson's vessel, and took in Dr Johnson. He was quite well, though he had tasted nothing but a dish* of tea since Saturday night. On our expressing some surprise at this, he said, that, "when he lodged in the Temple, and had no regular system of life, he had fasted for two days at a time, during which he had gone about visiting, though not at the hours of dinner

or supper; that he had drunk tea, but eaten no bread, that this was no intentional fasting, but happened just in the course of a literary life"

There was a little miserable publick-house close upon the shore, to which we should have gone, had we



DR JOHNSON ON A HIGHLAND SHELTY

(from *Carruthers's Edition*, 1852)

landed last night; but this morning Col resolved to take us directly to the house of Captain Lauchlan M'Lean, a descendant of his family, who had acquired a fortune in the East-Indies, and taken a farm in Col. We had about an English mile to go to it. Col and Joseph, and some others, ran to some little horses, called here *Shelties*, that were running wild on a heath, and caught

one of them. We had a saddle with us, which was clapped upon it, and a straw-halter was put on its head. Dr Johnson was then mounted, and Joseph very slowly and gravely led the horse. I said to Dr Johnson, "I wish, sir, *the club* saw you in this attitude."

It was a very heavy rain, and I was wet to the skin. Captain M'Lean had but a poor temporary house, or rather hut; however, it was a very good haven to us. There was a blazing peat-fire, and Mrs M'Lean, daughter of the minister of the parish, got us tea. I felt still the motion of the sea. Dr Johnson said, it was not in imagination, but a continuation of motion on the fluids, like that of the sea itself after the storm is over.

The day passed away pleasantly enough. The wind became fair for Mull in the evening, and Mr Simpson resolved to sail next morning: but having been thrown into the island of Col, we were unwilling to leave it unexamined, especially as we considered that the Campbell-town vessel would sail for Mull in a day or two, and therefore we determined to stay.

Tuesday, 5th October

I rose, and wrote my Journal till about nine; and then went to Dr Johnson, who sat up in bed and talked and laughed. said, it was curious to look back ten years, to the time when we first thought of visiting the Hebrides. How distant and improbable the scheme then appeared! Yet here we were actually among them.

After breakfast, Dr Johnson and I, and Joseph, mounted horses, and Col and the captain walked with us about a short mile across the island. We paid a visit to the Reverend Mr Hector M'Lean. His parish consists of the islands of Col and Tyr-yi. He was about seventy-seven years of age, a decent ecclesiastick, dressed in a full suit of black clothes, and a black wig. He appeared like a Dutch pastor, or one of the assembly of divines at Westminster. Dr Johnson observed to me afterwards, "that he was a fine old man, and was as

well-dressed, and had as much dignity in his appearance as the dean of a cathedral." We were told, that he had a valuable library, though but poor accommodation for it, being obliged to keep his books in large chests. It was curious to see him and Dr Johnson together. Neither of them heard very distinctly; so each of them talked in his own way, and at the same time.

We rode to the northern part of the island, where we saw the ruins of a church or chapel. We then proceeded to a place called Grissipol, or the rough Pool.

At Grissipol we found a good farm house, belonging to the Laird of Col, and possessed by Mr M'Sweyn. On the beach here there is a singular variety of curious stones. I picked up one very like a small cucumber. Mr M'Sweyn left Sky upon the late M'Leod's raising his rents. He then got this farm from Col.

He appeared to be near fourscore; but looked as fresh, and was as strong as a man of fifty. His son Hugh looked older; and, as Dr Johnson observed, had more the manners of an old man than he. I had often heard of such instances, but never saw one before. Mrs M'Sweyn was a decent old gentlewoman. She was dressed in tartan, and could speak nothing but Erse. She said, she taught Sir James M'Donald Erse, and would teach me soon. I could now sing a verse of the song *Hatyin foann'eri*, made in honour of Allan, the famous Captain of Clanranald, who fell at Sheriffmuir; whose servant, who lay on the field watching his master's dead body, being asked next day who that was, answered, "He was a man yesterday."

We were entertained here with a primitive heartiness. Whisky was served round in a shell, according to the ancient Highland custom. Dr Johnson would not partake of it; but, being desirous to do honour to the modes "of other times," drank some water out of the shell.

We set out after dinner for Breacacha, the family seat of the Laird of Col, accompanied by the young laird, who had now got a horse, and by the younger Mr M'Sweyn, whose wife had gone thither before us,

to prepare everything for our reception, the Laird and his family being absent at Aberdeen. It is called Breacacha, or the Spotted Field, because in summer it is enamelled with clover and daisies, as young Col told me. We passed by a place where there is a very large stone, I may call it a *rack*;—"a vast weight for Ajax."* The tradition is, that a giant threw such another stone at his mistress, up to the top of a hill, at a small distance; and that she in return threw this mass down to him. It was all in sport.

As we advanced, we came to a large extent of plain ground. I had not seen such a place for a long time. Col and I took a gallop upon it by way of race. It was very refreshing to me, after having been so long taking short steps in hilly countries. It was like stretching a man's legs after being cramped in a short bed. We also passed close by a large extent of sand-hills, near two miles square.

The sand has of late been blown over a good deal of meadow; and the people of the island say, that their fathers remembered much of the space which is now covered with sand, to have been under tillage. Col's house is situated on a bay called Breacacha Bay. We found here a neat new-built gentleman's house, better than any we had been in since we were at Lord Errol's. Dr Johnson relished it much at first, but soon remarked to me, that "there was nothing becoming a Chief about it: it was a mere tradesman's box." He seemed quite at home, and no longer found any difficulty in using the Highland address; for, as soon as we arrived, he said, with a spirited familiarity, "Now, Col, if you could get us a dish of tea."—Dr Johnson and I had each an excellent bed-chamber. We had a dispute which of us had the best curtains. His were rather the best, being of linen; but I insisted that my bed had the best posts, which was undeniable. "Well (said he), if you *have* the best *posts*, we will have you tied to them and whipped."—I mention this slight circumstance, only to shew how ready he is, even in mere trifles, to get the

better of his antagonist, by placing him in a ludicrous view. I have known him sometimes use the same art, when hard pressed in serious disputation. Goldsmith, I remember, to retaliate for many a severe defeat which he had suffered from him, applied to him a lively saying in one of Cibber's* comedies, which puts this part of his character in a strong light.—“There is no arguing with Johnson; for, if his pistol misses fire, he knocks you down with the butt-end of it.”

Wednesday, 6th October

After a sufficiency of sleep, we assembled at breakfast. We were just as if in barracks. Every body was master. We went and viewed the old castle of Col, which is not far from the present house, near the shore, and founded on a rock. It has never been a larger feudal residence, and has nothing about it that requires a particular description. Like other old inconvenient buildings of the same age, it exemplified Gray's picturesque lines,

“Huge windows that exclude the light,
And passages that lead to nothing.”

It may, however, be worth mentioning, that on the second story we saw a vault, which was, and still is, the family prison. There was a woman put into it by the laird, for theft, within these ten years; and any offender would be confined there yet; for, from the necessity of the thing, as the island is remote from any power established by law, the laird must exercise his jurisdiction to a certain degree.

We were shewn, in a corner of this vault, a hole, into which Col said greater criminals used to be put. It was now filled up with rubbish of different kinds. He said, it was of a great depth. “Ay (said Dr Johnson, smiling), all such places, that *are filled up*, were of a great depth.” He is very quick in shewing that he does not give credit to careless or exaggerated accounts of things. After seeing the castle, we looked at a small hut near it. It is called Teigh Franchich, *i.e.* the Frenchman's House.

Col could not tell us the history of it. A poor man with a wife and children now lived in it. We went into it, and Dr Johnson gave them some charity. There was but one bed for all the family, and the hut was very smoky. When he came out he said to me, "*Et hoc secundum sententiam philosophorum est esse beatus.*"*—BOSWELL. "The philosophers, when they placed happiness in a cottage, supposed cleanliness and no smoke."—JOHNSON. "Sir, they did not think about either."

We walked a little in the laird's garden, in which endeavours have been used to rear some trees; but, as soon as they got above the surrounding wall, they died. Dr Johnson recommended sowing the seeds of hardy trees, instead of planting.

Col and I rode out this morning, and viewed a part of the island. In the course of our ride, we saw a turnip-field, which he had hoed with his own hands. He first introduced this kind of husbandry into the Western Islands.

Thursday, 7th October

Captain M'Lean joined us this morning at breakfast. There came on a dreadful storm of wind and rain, which continued all day, and rather increased at night. The wind was directly against our getting to Mull. We were in a strange state of abstraction from the world; we could neither hear from our friends, nor write to them.

Friday, 8th October

Dr Johnson appeared to-day very weary of our present confined situation. He said, "I want to be on the main land, and go on with existence. This is a waste of life."

Talking of our confinement here, I observed, that our discontent and impatience could not be considered as very unreasonable; for that we were just in the state of which Seneca* complains so grievously, while in exile in Corsica. "Yes (said Dr Johnson), and he was not

farther from home than we are." The truth is, he was much nearer.

There was a good deal of rain to-day, and the wind was still contrary.

The inhabitants of Col have increased considerably within these thirty years, as appears from the parish registers. There are but three considerable tacksmen on Col's part of the island: the rest is let to small tenants, some of whom pay so low a rent as four, three, or even two guineas. The highest is seven pounds, paid by a farmer, whose son goes yearly on foot to Aberdeen for education, and in summer returns, and acts as a school-master in Col. Dr Johnson said, "There is something noble in a young man's walking two hundred miles and back again, every year, for the sake of learning."

Saturday, 9th October

As, in our present confinement, any thing that had even the name of curious was an object of attention, I proposed that Col should show me the great stone, mentioned in a former page, as having been thrown by a giant to the top of a mountain. Dr Johnson, who did not like to be left alone, said he would accompany us as far as riding was practicable. We ascended a part of the hill on horseback, and Col and I scrambled up the rest. A servant held our horses, and Dr Johnson placed himself on the ground, with his back against a large fragment of rock. The wind being high, he let down the cocks of his hat, and tied it with his handkerchief under his chin.

We next proceeded to the lead mine. In our way we came to a strand of some extent, where we were glad to take a gallop, in which my learned friend joined with great alacrity. Dr Johnson, mounted on a large bay mare without shoes, and followed by a foal, which had some difficulty in keeping up with him, was a singular spectacle.

We did not sit down to dinner till between six and seven. We lived plentifully here, and had a true welcome.

In such a season, good firing was of no small importance. The peats were excellent, and burned cheerfully. Those at Dunvegan, which were damp, Dr Johnson called "a sullen fuel."—Here a Scottish phrase was singularly applied to him. One of the company having remarked that he had gone out on a stormy evening, and brought in a supply of peats from the stack, old Mr M'Sweyn said, "that was *main honest*!"

Sunday, 10th October

There was this day the most terrible storm of wind and rain that I ever remember. It made such an awful impression on us all, as to produce, for some time, a kind of dismal quietness in the house.

Monday, 11th October

We had some days ago engaged the Campbell-town vessel to carry us to Mull, from the harbour where she lay. The morning was fine, and the wind fair and moderate; so we hoped at length to get away.

Mrs M'Sweyn, who officiated as our landlady here, had never been on the main land. On hearing this, Dr Johnson said to me, before her, "That is rather being behind-hand with life. I would at least go and see Glenelg."—BOSWELL. "You yourself, sir, have never seen, till now, any thing but your native island."—JOHNSON. "But, sir, by seeing London, I have seen as much of life as the world can shew."—BOSWELL. "You have not seen Pekin."—JOHNSON. "What is Pekin? Ten thousand Londoners would drive all the people of Pekin; they would drive them like deer."

We set out about eleven for the harbour; but, before we reached it, so violent a storm came on, that we were obliged again to take shelter in the house of Captain M'Lean, where we dined, and passed the night.

Tuesday, 12th October

After breakfast, we made a second attempt to get to the harbour; but another storm soon convinced us that

it would be in vain. We resolved to go to Mr M'Sweyn's, where we arrived very wet, fatigued, and hungry. In this situation, we were somewhat disconcerted by being told that we should have no dinner till late in the evening; but should have tea in the mean time. Dr Johnson opposed this arrangement; but they persisted, and he took the tea very readily. He said to me afterwards, "You must consider, sir, a dinner here is a matter of great consequence. It is a thing to be first planned, and then executed. I suppose the mutton was brought some miles off, from some place where they knew there was a sheep killed."

On Monday we had a dispute at the Captain's, whether sand-hills could be fixed down by art. Dr Johnson said, "How *the devil* can you do it?" but instantly corrected himself, "How can you do it?"—I never before heard him use a phrase of that nature.

He has particularities which it is impossible to explain. He never wears a night-cap, as I have already mentioned; but he puts a handkerchief on his head in the night.—The day that we left Talisker, he bade us ride on. He then turned the head of his horse back towards Talisker, stopped for some time; then wheeled round to the same direction with ours, and then came briskly after us. He sets open a window in the coldest day or night, and stands before it. It may do with his constitution; but most people, amongst whom I am one, would say, with the frogs in the fable, "This may be sport to you; but it is death to us."*—It is in vain to try to find a meaning in every one of his particularities, which, I suppose, are mere habits, contracted by chance; of which every man has some that are more or less remarkable. His speaking to himself, or rather repeating, is a common habit with studious men accustomed to deep thinking; and, in consequence of their being thus rapt, they will even laugh by themselves, if the subject which they are musing on is a merry one. Dr Johnson is often uttering pious ejaculations, when he appears to be talking to himself; for sometimes his voice grows stronger, and parts of the

Lord's Prayer are heard. I have sat beside him with more than ordinary reverence on such occasions.

In our Tour, I observed that he was disgusted whenever he met with coarse manners. He said to me, "I know not how it is, but I cannot bear low life: and I find others, who have as good a right as I to be fastidious, bear it better, by having mixed more with different sorts of men. You would think that I have mixed pretty well too."

Wednesday, 13th October

Col called me up, with intelligence that it was a good day for a passage to Mull; and just as we rose, a sailor from the vessel arrived for us. We got all ready with dispatch. Dr Johnson was displeased at my hustling, and walking quickly up and down. He said, "It does not hasten us a bit. It is getting on horseback in a ship. All boys do it; and you are longer a boy than others."

Before we reached the harbour, the wind grew high again. However, the small boat was waiting, and took us on board. We remained for some time in uncertainty what to do: at last it was determined, that, as a good part of the day was over, and it was dangerous to be at sea at night, in such a vessel, and such weather, we should not sail till the morning tide, when the wind would probably be more gentle. We resolved not to go ashore again, but lie here in readiness. Dr Johnson and I had each a bed in the cabin. Col sat at the fire in the fore-castle, with the captain, and Joseph, and the rest. I eat some dry oatmeal, of which I found a barrel in the cabin. I had not done this since I was a boy. Dr Johnson owned that he too was fond of it when a boy; a circumstance which I was highly pleased to hear from him, as it gave me an opportunity of observing that, notwithstanding his joke on the article of OATS, he was himself a proof that this kind of *food* was not peculiar to the people of Scotland.

Thursday, 14th October

When Dr Johnson awaked this morning, he called, "Lanky!" having, I suppose, been thinking of Langton; but corrected himself instantly, and cried, "Bozzy!" He has a way of contracting the names of his friends. Goldsmith feels himself so important now, as to be displeased at it. I remember one day, when Tom Davies was telling that Dr Johnson said, "We are all in labour for a name to *Goldy's* play," Goldsmith cried, "I have often desired him not to call me *Goldy*."

Between six and seven we hauled our anchor, and set sail with a fair breeze; and, after a pleasant voyage, we got safely and agreeably into the harbour of Tobermorie, before the wind rose, which it always has done, for some days, about noon.

Tobermorie is an excellent harbour. An island lies before it, and it is surrounded by a hilly theatre. The island is too low, otherwise this would be quite a secure port; but, the island not being a sufficient protection, some storms blow very hard here. Not long ago, fifteen vessels were blown from their moorings. There are sometimes sixty or seventy sail here: to-day there were twelve or fourteen vessels. To see such a fleet was the next thing to seeing a town. The vessels were from different places; Clyde, Campbell-town, Newcastle, &c. One was returning to Lancaster from Hamburg. After having been shut up so long in Col, the sight of such an assemblage of moving habitations, containing such a variety of people, engaged in different pursuits, gave me much gaiety of spirit. When we had landed, Dr Johnson said, "Boswell is now all alive. He is like Antæus*; he gets new vigour whenever he touches the ground."—I went to the top of a hill fronting the harbour, from whence I had a good view of it. We had here a tolerable inn. Dr Johnson had owned to me this morning, that he was out of humour. Indeed, he shewed it a good deal in the ship; for when I was expressing

my joy on the prospect of our landing in Mull, he said, he had no joy, when he recollected that it would be five days before he should get to the main land. I was afraid he would now take a sudden resolution to give up seeing Icolmkill. A dish of tea, and some good bread and butter, did him service, and his bad humour went off. I told him, that I was diverted to hear all the people whom we had visited in our Tour, say, "Honest man! he's pleased with every thing; he's always content!"—"Little do they know," said I. He laughed, and said, "You rogue!"

We sent to hire horses to carry us across the island of Mull to the shore opposite to Inch Kenneth, the residence of Sir Allan M'Lean, uncle to young Col, and Chief of the M'Leans, to whose house we intended to go the next day.

Dr Johnson and I sat by ourselves at the inn, and talked a good deal.

A Newcastle ship-master, who happened to be in the house, intruded himself upon us. He was much in liquor, and talked nonsense about his being a man for *Willes and Liberty*, and against the ministry. Dr Johnson was angry, that "a fellow should come into *our* company, who was fit for *no* company." He left us soon.

Friday, 15th October

We this morning found that we could not proceed, there being a violent storm of wind and rain, and the rivers being impassable. When I expressed my discontent at our confinement, Dr Johnson said, "Now that I have had an opportunity of writing to the main land, I am in no such haste." I was amused with his being so easily satisfied; for the truth was, that the gentleman who was to convey our letters, as I was now informed, was not to set out for Inveraray for some time; so that it was probable we should be there as soon as he: however, I did not undeceive my friend, but suffered him to enjoy his fancy.

Saturday, 16th October

This day there was a new moon, and the weather changed for the better. We set out, mounted on little Mull horses. Mull corresponded exactly with the idea which I had always had of it; a hilly country, diversified with heath and grass, and many rivulets. Dr Johnson was not in very good humour. He said, it was a dreary country, much worse than Sky. I differed from him. "O, sir (said he), a most dolorous country!"

We had a very hard journey to-day. I had no bridle for my sheltie, but only a halter; and Joseph rode without a saddle. At one place, a loch having swelled over the road, we were obliged to plunge through pretty deep water. Dr Johnson observed, how helpless a man would be, were he travelling here alone, and should meet with any accident; and said, "he longed to get to a *country of saddles and bridles*." He was more out of humour to-day, than he has been in the course of our Tour, being fretted to find that his little horse could scarcely support his weight;—and having suffered a loss, which, though small in itself, was of some consequence to him, while travelling the rugged steeps of Mull, where he was at times obliged to walk. The loss that I allude to was that of the large oak-stick, which, as I formerly mentioned, he had brought with him from London. It was of great use to him in our wild peregrination; for, ever since his last illness in 1766, he has had a weakness in his knees, and has not been able to walk easily. It had too the properties of a measure; for one nail was driven into it at the length of a foot; another at that of a yard. In return for the services it had done him, he said, this morning, he would make a present of it to some Museum; but he little thought he was so soon to lose it. As he preferred riding with a switch, it was intrusted to a fellow to be delivered to our baggage-man, who followed us at some distance, but we never saw it more. I could not persuade him out of a suspicion that it had been stolen. "No, no, my friend (said he), it is

not to be expected that any man in Mull, who has got it, will part with it. Consider, sir, the value of such a *piece of timber* here!"

We were in hopes to get to Sir Allan Macleod's at Inchkenneth, to-night; but the eight miles, of which our road was said to consist, were so very long, that we did not reach the opposite coast of Mull till seven at night, though we had set out about eleven in the forenoon; and when we did arrive there, we found the wind strong against us. Col determined that we should pass the night at M'Quarrie's, in the island of Ulva,* which lies between Mull and Inchkenneth; and a servant was sent forward to the ferry, to secure the boat for us: but the boat was gone to the Ulva side, and the wind was so high that the people could not hear him call; and the night so dark that they could not see a signal. We should have been in a very bad situation, had there not fortunately been lying in the little sound of Ulva an Irish vessel, the *Bonnetta*, of Londonderry, Captain M'Lure, master. He himself was at M'Quarrie's; but his men obligingly came with their long-boat, and ferried us over.

M'Quarrie's house was mean; but we were agreeably surprised with the appearance of the master, whom we found to be intelligent, polite, and much a man of the world. Though his clan is not numerous, he is a very ancient Chief, and has a burial place at Icolmkill. He told us, his family had possessed Ulva for nine hundred years; but I was distressed to hear that it was soon to be sold for payment of his debts.

We had each an elegant bed in the same room; and here it was that a circumstance occurred, as to which he has been strangely misunderstood. From his description of his chamber, it has erroneously been supposed, that his bed being too short for him, his feet, during the night, were in the mire; whereas he has only said, that when he undressed, he felt his feet in the mire: that is, the clay-floor of the room, on which he stood upon before he went into bed, was wet, in consequence of the windows being broken, which let in the rain.

Sunday, 17th October

Being informed that there was nothing worthy of observation in Ulva, we took boat, and proceeded to Inchkenneth, where we were introduced by our friend Col to Sir Allan M'Lean, the Chief of his clan, and to two young ladies, his daughters. Inchkenneth is a pretty little island, a mile long, and about half a mile broad, all good land.

As we walked up from the shore, Dr Johnson's heart was cheered by the sight of a road marked with cart-wheels, as on the main land; a thing which we had not seen for a long time. It gave us a pleasure similar to that which a traveller feels, when, whilst wandering on what he fears is a desert island, he perceives the print of human feet.

Dr Johnson here shewed so much of the spirit of a Highlander, that he won Sir Allan's heart; indeed, he has shewn it during the whole of our Tour.—One night, in Col, he strutted about the room with a broad sword and target, and made a formidable appearance; and, another night, I took the liberty to put a large blue bonnet on his head. His age, his size, and his bushy grey wig, with this covering on it, presented the image of a venerable *Senachi**: and, however unfavourable to the Lowland Scots, he seemed much pleased to assume the appearance of an ancient Caledonian.

Monday, 18th October

We agreed to pass this day with Sir Allan, and he engaged to have every thing in order for our voyage to-morrow.

Being now soon to be separated from our amiable friend young Col, his merits were all remembered. At Ulva he had appeared in a new character, having given us a good prescription for a cold. On my mentioning him with warmth, Dr Johnson said, "Col does every thing for us: we will erect a statue to Col."—"Yes (said I), and we will have him with his various attributes and

characters, like Mercury, or any other of the heathen gods. We will have him as a pilot; we will have him as a fisherman, as a hunter, as a husbandman, as a physician."

Young Col told us he could run down a greyhound; "for (said he) the dog runs himself out of breath, by going too quick, and then I get up with him." I accounted for his advantage over the dog, by remarking that Col had the faculty of reason, and knew how to moderate his pace, which the dog had not sense enough to do. Dr Johnson said, "He is a noble animal. He is as complete an islander as the mind can figure. He is a farmer, a sailor, a hunter, a fisher: he will run you down a dog: if any man has a *tail*,* it is Col. He is hospitable; and he has an intrepidity of talk, whether he understands the subject or not. I regret that he is not more intellectual."

Tuesday, 19th October

After breakfast we took leave of the young ladies, and of our excellent companion Col, to whom we had been so much obliged. He had now put us under the care of his Chief; and was to hasten back to Sky. We parted from him with very strong feelings of kindness and gratitude; and we hoped to have had some future opportunity of proving to him the sincerity of what we felt; but in the following year he was unfortunately lost in the Sound between Ulva and Mull; and this imperfect memorial, joined to the high honour of being tenderly and respectfully mentioned by Dr Johnson, is the only return which the uncertainty of human events has permitted us to make to this deserving young man.

We saw the island of Staffa, at no very great distance, but could not land upon it, the surge was so high on its rocky coast.

Sir Allan, anxious for the honour of Mull, was still talking of its *woods*, and pointing them out to Dr Johnson, as appearing at a distance on the skirts of that island, as we sailed along.—JOHNSON. "Sir, I saw at Tobermorrie

what they called a wood, which I unluckily took for *heath*. If you shew me what I shall take for *furze*, it will be something."

We continued to coast along Mull, and passed by Nuns' Island, which, it is said, belonged to the nuns of Icolmkill, and from which, we were told, the stone for the buildings there was taken. As we sailed along by moonlight, in a sea somewhat rough, and often between black



IONA IN 1772

(from Fournier's "A Voyage to the Hebrides," 1779)

and gloomy rocks, Dr Johnson said, "If this be not *roving among the Hebrides*, nothing is."—The repetition of words which he had so often previously used, made a strong impression on my imagination; and, by a natural course of thinking, led me to consider how our present adventures would appear to me at a future period.

After a tedious sail, which, by our following various turnings of the coast of Mull, was extended to about forty miles, it gave us no small pleasure to perceive a

light in the village at Icolmkill, in which almost all the inhabitants of the island live, close to where the ancient building stood. As we approached the shore, the tower of the cathedral, just discernible in the air, was a picturesque object.

When we had landed upon the sacred place, which, as long as I can remember, I had thought on with veneration, Dr Johnson and I cordially embraced. We had long talked of visiting Icolmkill; and, from the lateness of the season, were at times very doubtful whether we should be able to effect our purpose. To have seen it, even alone, would have given me great satisfaction; but the venerable scene was rendered much more pleasing by the company of my great and pious friend, who was no less affected by it than I was; and who has described the impressions it should make on the mind, with such strength of thought, and energy of language, that I shall quote his words, as conveying my own sensations much more forcibly than I am capable of doing:

"We were now treading that illustrious Island, which was once the luminary of the Caledonian regions, whence savage clans and roving barbarians derived the benefits of knowledge, and the blessings of religion. To abstract the mind from all local emotion would be impossible, if it were endeavoured, and would be foolish if it were possible. Whatever withdraws us from the power of our senses, whatever makes the past, the distant, or the future, predominate over the present, advances us in the dignity of thinking beings. Far from me, and from my friends, be such frigid philosophy as may conduct us indifferent and unmoved over any ground which has been dignified by wisdom, bravery or virtue. That man is little to be envied, whose patriotism would not gain force upon the plain of *Marathon*, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of *Iona*!"

Upon hearing that Sir Allan M'Lean was arrived, the inhabitants, who still consider themselves as the people of M'Lean, to whom the island formerly belonged, though

the Duke of Argyll has at present possession of it, ran eagerly to him.

We were accommodated this night in a large barn, the island affording no lodging that we should have liked so well. Some good hay was strewed at one end of it, to form a bed for us, upon which we lay with our clothes on; and we were furnished with blankets from the village. Each of us had a portmanteau for a pillow. When I awaked in the morning, and looked round me, I could not help smiling at the idea of the chief of the M'Leans, the great English Moralist, and myself, lying thus extended in such a situation.

Wednesday, 20th October

Early in the morning we surveyed the remains of antiquity at this place, accompanied by an illiterate fellow, as *Cicerone*, who called himself a descendant of a cousin of Saint Columba, the founder of the religious establishment here. As I knew that many persons had already examined them, and as I saw Dr Johnson inspecting and measuring several of the ruins of which he has since given so full an account, my mind was quiescent; and I resolved to stroll among them at my ease, to take no trouble to investigate minutely, and only receive the general impression of solemn antiquity, and the particular ideas of such objects as should of themselves strike my attention.

Icolmkill is a fertile island. The inhabitants export some cattle and grain; and I was told, they import nothing but iron and salt. They are industrious, and make their own woollen and linen cloth; and they brew a good deal of beer, which we did not find in any of the other islands.

We set sail again about mid-day, and in the evening landed on Mull, near the house of the Reverend Mr Neal M'Leod, who having been informed of our coming, by a message from Sir Allan, came out to meet us. We were this night very agreeably entertained at his house. Dr Johnson observed to me, that he was the

cleanest-headed man that he had met with in the Western Islands. He seemed to be well acquainted with Dr Johnson's writings, and courteously said, "I have been often obliged to you, though I never had the pleasure of seeing you before."

He told us, he had lived for some time in St Kilda, under the tuition of the minister or catechist there, and had there first read Horace and Virgil. The scenes which they describe must have been a strong contrast to the dreary waste around him.

Thursday, 21st October

Sir Allan M'Lean bragged that Scotland had the advantage of England, by its having more water. JOHNSON, "Sir, we would not have your water, to take the vile bogs which produce it. You have too much! A man who is drowned has more water than either of us";—and then he laughed.—(But this was surely robust sophistry: for the people of taste in England, who have seen Scotland, own that its variety of rivers and lakes makes it naturally more beautiful than England, in that respect.)—Pursuing his victory over Sir Allan, he proceeded: "Your country consists of two things, stone and water. There is, indeed, a little earth above the stone in some places, but a very little; and the stone is always appearing. It is like a man in rags; the naked skin is still peeping out."

After a very tedious ride, through what appeared to me the most gloomy and desolate country I had ever beheld, we arrived, between seven and eight o'clock, at Moy, the seat of the Laird of Lochbuy.

We had heard much of Lochbuy's being a great roaring braggadocio, a kind of Sir John Falstaff, both in size and manners; but we found that they had swelled him up to a fictitious size, and clothed him with imaginary qualities.—Col's idea of him was equally extravagant, though very different: he told us, he was quite a Don Quixote; and said, he would give a great deal to see him and Dr Johnson together. The truth is, that Lochbuy proved to be only a

bluff, comely, noisy old gentleman, proud of his hereditary consequence, and a very hearty and hospitable landlord. Being told that Dr Johnson did not hear well, Lochbuy bawled out to him, "Are you of the Johnstons of Glencro, or of Ardnamurchan?"—Dr Johnson gave him a significant look, but made no answer; and I told Lochbuy that he was not *Johnston*, but *Johnson*, and that he was an Englishman.

Sir Allan, Lochbuy, and I, had the conversation chiefly to ourselves to-night: Dr Johnson, being extremely weary, went to bed soon after supper.

Friday, 22nd October

Before Dr Johnson came to breakfast, Lady Lochbuy said, "he was a *dungeon* of wit"; a very common phrase in Scotland to express a profoundness of intellect, though he afterwards told me that he never had heard it.

We then set out for the ferry, by which we were to cross to the main land of Argyleshire. Lochbuy and Sir Allan accompanied us. We were told much of a war-saddle, on which this reputed Don Quixote used to be mounted; but we did not see it, for the young laird had applied it to a less noble purpose, having taken it to Falkirk fair *with a drove of black cattle*.

We bade adieu to Lochbuy, and to our very kind conductor, Sir Allan M'Lean, on the shore of Mull, and then got into the ferry-boat, the bottom of which was strewed with branches of trees or bushes, upon which we sat. We had a good day and a fine passage, and in the evening landed at Oban, where we found a tolerable inn. After having been so long confined at different times in islands, from which it was always uncertain when we could get away, it was comfortable to be now on the main land, and to know that, if in health, we might get to any place in Scotland or England in a certain number of days.

Saturday, 23rd October

After a good night's rest, we breakfasted at our leisure.

We could get but one bridle here, which, according to the maxim *detur digniori*,* was appropriated to Dr

Johnson's sheltie. I and Joseph rode with halters. We crossed in a ferry-boat a pretty wide lake, and on the farther side of it, close by the shore, found a hut for our inn. We were much wet. I changed my clothes in part, and was at pains to get myself well dried. Dr Johnson resolutely kept on all his clothes, wet as they were, letting them steam before the smoky turf fire. I thought him in the wrong; but his firmness was, perhaps, a species of heroism.

It rained very hard as we journeyed on after dinner. The roar of torrents from the mountains, as we passed along in the dusk, and the other circumstances attending our ride this evening, have been mentioned with so much animation by Dr Johnson, that I shall not attempt to say any thing on the subject.

We got at night to Inveraray, where we found an excellent inn. Even here, Dr Johnson would not change his wet clothes.

The prospect of good accommodation cheered us much. We supped well; and after supper, Dr Johnson, whom I had not seen taste any fermented liquor during all our travels, called for a gill of whisky. "Come (said he), let me know what it is that makes a Scotchman happy!" He drank it all but a drop, which I begged leave to pour into my glass, that I might say we had drunk whisky together. I proposed Mrs Thrale should be our toast. He would not have *her* drunk in whisky, but rather "some insular lady"; so we drank one of the ladies whom we had lately left.—He owned to-night, that he got as good a room and bed as at an English inn.

I had here the pleasure of finding a letter from home, which relieved me from the anxiety I had suffered, in consequence of not having received any account of my family for many weeks.

Sunday, 24th October

I told Dr Johnson I was in some difficulty how to act at Inveraray. He was impatient to go to Glasgow, where he expected letters. At the same time he was,

I believe, secretly not unwilling to have attention paid him by so great a Chieftain, and so exalted a nobleman. He insisted that I should not go to the castle this day before dinner, as it would look like seeking an invitation. "But (said I) if the duke invites us to dine with him to-morrow, shall we accept?"—"Yes, sir"; I think he said, "to be sure." But, he added, "He won't ask us!"—I mentioned, that I was afraid my company might be disagreeable to the duchess. He treated this objection with a manly disdain: "*That*, sir, he must settle with his wife."—We dined well. I went to the castle just about the time when I supposed the ladies would be retired from dinner. I sent in my name; and, being shewn in, found the amiable duke sitting at the head of his table with several gentlemen. I was most politely received, and gave his grace some particulars of the curious journey which I had been making with Dr Johnson. When we rose from table, the duke said to me, "I hope you and Dr Johnson will dine with us to-morrow." I thanked his grace; but told him my friend was in a great hurry to get back to London. The duke, with a kind complacency, said, "He will stay one day; and I will take care he shall see this place to advantage." I said, I should be sure to let him know his grace's invitation.

Monday, 25th October

My acquaintance, the Reverend Mr John M'Aulay, one of the Ministers of Inveraray, and brother to our good friend at Calder, came to us this morning, and accompanied us to the castle, where I presented Dr Johnson to the Duke of Argyll. We were shewn through the house; and I never shall forget the impression made upon my fancy by some of the ladies' maids tripping about in neat morning dresses. After seeing for a long time little but rusticity, their lively manner, and gay inviting appearance, pleased me so much, that I thought, for the moment, I could have been a knight-errant for them.

We then got into a low one-horse chair, ordered for us

by the duke, in which we drove about the place. Dr Johnson was much struck by the grandeur and elegance of this princely seat. He thought, however, the castle too low, and wished it had been a story higher.—He said, "What I admire here, is the total defiance of expence." I had a particular pride in shewing him a great number of fine old trees, to compensate for the nakedness which had made such an impression on him on the eastern coast of Scotland.

He was much pleased with our visit at the castle of Inveraray. The Duke of Argyle was exceedingly polite to him, and, upon his complaining of the shelties which he had hitherto ridden being too small for him, his grace told him he should be provided with a good horse to carry him next day.

Tuesday, 26th October

We were now "in a country of bridles and saddles," and set out fully equipped. The Duke of Argyle was obliging enough to mount Dr Johnson on a stately steed from his grace's stable. My friend was highly pleased, and Joseph said, "He now looks like a bishop."

We dined at the inn at Tarbat, and at night came to Rosedow, the beautiful seat of Sir James Colquhoun, on the banks of Lochlomond, where I, and any friends whom I have introduced, have ever been received with kind and elegant hospitality.

Wednesday, 27th October

After breakfast, Dr Johnson and I were furnished with a boat, and sailed about upon Lochlomond, and landed on some of the islands which are interspersed. He was much pleased with the scene, which is so well known by the accounts of various travellers, that it is unnecessary for me to attempt any description of it.

We were favoured with Sir James Colquhoun's coach to convey us in the evening to Cameron, the seat of Commissary Smollet. Our satisfaction of finding ourselves again in a comfortable carriage was very great.

We had a pleasing conviction of the commodiousness of civilization, and heartily laughed at the ravings of those absurd visionaries who have attempted to persuade us of the superior advantages of a *state of nature*.

Mr Smollet was a man of considerable learning, with abundance of animal spirits; so that he was a very good companion for Dr Johnson, who said to me, "We have had more solid talk here than at any place where we have been."

Thursday, 28th October

Here a post-chaise, which I had ordered from Glasgow, came for us, and we drove on in high spirits. We stopped at Dunbarton, and though the approach to the castle there is very steep, Dr Johnson ascended it with alacrity, and surveyed all that was to be seen. During the whole of our Tour he shewed uncommon spirit, could not bear to be treated like an old or infirm man, and was very unwilling to accept of any assistance, insomuch that, at our landing at Icolmkill, when Sir Allan M'Lean and I submitted to be carried on men's shoulders from the boat to the shore, as it could not be brought quite close to land, he sprang into the sea, and waded vigorously out.

On our arrival at the Saracen's Head Inn, at Glasgow, I was made happy by good accounts from home; and Dr Johnson, who had not received a single letter since we left Aberdeen, found here a great many, the perusal of which entertained him much. He enjoyed in imagination the comforts which we could now command, and seemed to be in high glee. I remember, he put a leg up on each side of the grate, and said, with a mock solemnity, by way of soliloquy, but loud enough for me to hear it, "Here am I, an ENGLISH man, sitting by a coal fire."

Saturday, 30th October

We set out towards Ayrshire. I sent Joseph on to Loudoun, with a message, that, if the earl was at home, Dr Johnson and I would have the honour to dine with

him. Joseph met us on the road, and reported that the earl "*jumped for joy*," and said, "I shall be very happy to see them."—We were received with a most pleasing courtesy by his lordship, and by the countess his mother, who, in her ninety-fifth year, had all her faculties quite unimpaired. This was a very cheering sight to Dr Johnson, who had an extraordinary desire for long life. Her ladyship was sensible and well-informed, and had seen a great deal of the world. Her lord had held several high offices, and she was sister to the great Earl of Stair.

At night, we advanced a few miles farther, to the house of Mr Campbell of Treesbank, who was married to one of my wife's sisters, and were entertained very agreeably by a worthy couple.

Monday, 1st November

Though Dr Johnson was lazy, and averse to move, I insisted that he should go with me, and pay a visit to the Countess of Eglintoun, mother of the late and present earl. I assured him, he would find himself amply recompensed for the trouble; and he yielded to my solicitations, though with some unwillingness. We were well mounted, and had not many miles to ride.

As we passed very near the castle of Dundonald, which was one of the many residencies of the kings of Scotland, and in which Robert the Second lived and died, Dr Johnson wished to survey it particularly. It stands on a beautiful rising ground, which is seen at a great distance on several quarters, and from whence there is so extensive a prospect of the rich district of Cuninghame,* the western sea, the isle of Arran, and a part of the northern coast of Ireland. It has long been unroofed; and, though of considerable size, we could not, by any power of imagination, figure it as having been a suitable habitation for majesty. Dr Johnson, to irritate my *old Scottish* enthusiasm, was very jocular on the homely accommodation of "*King Bob*," and roared and laughed till the ruins echoed.

Lady Eglintoune, though she was now in her eighty-fifth year, and had lived in the retirement of the country for almost half a century, was still a very agreeable woman. She was of the noble house of Kennedy, and had all the elevation which the consciousness of such birth inspires. Her figure was majestic, her manners high-bred, her reading extensive, and her conversation elegant. She had been the admiration of the gay circles of life, and the patroness of poets. Dr Johnson was delighted with his reception here. Her principles in church and state were congenial with his. She knew all his merit, and had heard much of him from her son, Earl Alexander, who loved to cultivate the acquaintance of men of talents, in every department.

In the course of our conversation this day, it came out that Lady Eglintoune was married the year before Dr Johnson was born; upon which she graciously said to him, that she might have been his mother; and that she now adopted him; and when we were going away, she embraced him, saying, "My dear son, farewell!"—My friend was much pleased with this day's entertainment, and owned that I had done well to force him out.

Tuesday, 2nd November

We were now in a country not only "of saddles and bridles," but of post-chaises; and having ordered one from Kilmarnock, we got to Auchinleck before dinner.

I was very anxious that all should be well; and begged of my friend to avoid three topics, as to which my father and he differed very widely: Whiggism, Presbyterianism, and—Sir John Pringle. He said courteously, "I shall certainly not talk on subjects which I am told are disagreeable to a gentleman under whose roof I am; especially, I shall not do so to *your father*."

Our first day went off very smoothly. It rained, and we could not get out; but my father shewed Dr Johnson his library, which, in curious editions of the Greek and Roman classics, is, I suppose, not excelled by any private collection in Great Britain. My father had

studied at Leyden, and been very intimate with the Gronovii, and other learned men there. He was a sound scholar, and, in particular, had collated manuscripts and different editions of Anacreon, and others of the Greek Lyrick poets, with great care; so that my friend and he had much matter for conversation, without touching on the fatal topicks of difference.

Wednesday, 3rd November

It rained all day, and gave Dr Johnson an impression of that incommodiousness of climate in the west, of which he has taken notice in his *Journey*; but, being well accommodated, and furnished with variety of books, he was not dissatisfied.

Some gentlemen of the neighbourhood came to visit my father; but there was little conversation. One of them asked Dr Johnson how he liked the Highlands. The question seemed to irritate him, for he answered, "How, sir, can you ask me what obliges me to speak unfavourably of a country where I have been hospitably entertained? Who *can* like the Highlands?—I like the inhabitants very well."—The gentleman asked no more questions.

Saturday, 6th November

I cannot be certain, whether it was on this day, or a former, that Dr Johnson and my father came in collision. If I recollect right, the contest began while my father was shewing him his collection of medals; and Oliver Cromwell's coin unfortunately introduced Charles the First, and Toryism. They became exceedingly warm, and violent, and I was very much distressed by being present at such an altercation between two men, both of whom I revered; yet I durst not interfere. It would certainly be very unbecoming in me to exhibit my honoured father, and my respected friend, as intellectual gladiators, for the entertainment of the publick; and therefore I suppress what would, I dare say, make an interesting scene in this dramattick sketch,—this account of the transit of Johnson over the Caledonian Hemisphere.

In the course of their altercation, Whiggism and Presbyterianism, Toryism and Episcopacy, were terribly buffeted. My worthy hereditary friend, Sir John Pringle, never having been mentioned, happily escaped without a bruise.*

My father's opinion of Dr Johnson may be conjectured from the name he afterwards gave him, which was *URSA MAJOR*.^{*} But it is not true, as has been reported, that it was in consequence of my saying that he was a *constellation* of genius and literature. It was a sly abrupt expression to one of his brethren on the bench of the Court of Session, in which Dr Johnson was then standing; but it was not said in his hearing.

Monday, 8th November

Notwithstanding the altercation that had passed, my father, who had the dignified courtesy of an old Baron, was very civil to Dr Johnson, and politely attended him to the post-chaise, which was to convey us to Edinburgh.

Thus they parted.—They are now in another, and a higher, state of existence: and as they were both worthy Christian men, I trust they have met in happiness. But I must observe, in justice to my friend's political principles, and my own, that they have met in a place where there is no room for *Whiggism*.

We came at night to a good inn at Hamilton.

Wednesday, 10th November

Lest it should be supposed that I have suppressed one of his sallies against my country, it may not be improper here to correct a mistaken account that has been circulated, as to his conversation this day. It has been said, that being desired to attend to the noble prospect from the Castle-hill (Edinburgh), he replied, "Sir, the noblest prospect that a Scotchman ever sees, is the high road that leads him to London."—This lively sarcasm was thrown out at a tavern in London, in my presence, many years before.

Saturday, 20th November

My illustrious friend, being now desirous to be again in the great theatre of life and animated exertion, took a place in the coach, which was to set out for London on Monday the 22nd of November.

Monday, 22nd November

I have now completed my account of our Tour to the Hebrides. I have brought Dr Johnson down to Scotland, and seen him into the coach which in a few hours carried him back into England. He said to me often, that the time he spent in this Tour was the pleasantest part of his life, and asked me if I would lose the recollection of it for five hundred pounds. I answered I would not; and he applauded my setting such a value on an accession of new images in my mind.

Had it not been for me, I am persuaded Dr Johnson never would have undertaken such a journey, and I must be allowed to assume some merit from having been the cause that our language has been enriched with such a book as that which he published on his return; a book which I never read but with the utmost admiration, as I had such opportunities of knowing from what very meagre materials it was composed.

NOTES

Page 16.—Sir Leslie Stephen (1832-1904), a famous man of letters. Editor of *The Cornhill Magazine* and the great *Dictionary of National Biography*. Best-known works: *Hours in a Library*; lives of Pope, Swift, Johnson; *English Literature and Society in the Eighteenth Century*.

Page 18.—Lord Monboddo, James Burnett (1714-1799), a judge of the Court of Session. Author of *The Origin of Language* and *Antient Metaphysics*. He had a great antipathy to Jobson, and often abused him to Boswell. "There were several points of similarity between them—learning, clearness of head, precision of speech, and a love of research on many subjects which people in general do not investigate. Foote paid Lord Monboddo the compliment of saying that he was 'an Elzevir edition of Johnson.'" Johnson in a letter to Mrs Thrale says of Monboddo: "He is a Scotch judge who has lately written a strange book about the origin of language, in which he traces monkeys up to men, and says that in some countries the human species have tails like other beasts. He enquired for these long-tailed men from Banks, and was not pleased that they had not been found in all his peregrinations." (Elzevir, *pr. él-zee-ver*: a Dutch family of publishers who produced famous editions of the classics, 1592-1680. Banks: Sir Joseph Banks, a famous navigator of the Australian seas.)

Page 32.—Lord Elibank, a judge of the Court of Session.

Dr Robertson, author of *A History of Scotland*, Principal of Edinburgh University, 1762-1792.

James Beattie, Master of Aberdeen Grammar School, 1758, Professor of Moral Philosophy and Logic at Aberdeen University, 1760-1803, author of a poem, *The Minstrel*, in Spenserian stanza.

Page 33.—Sophist: a teacher of rhetoric, philosophy, or ethics in ancient Greece. Now used of a captious or fallacious reasoner, one who disputes without real knowledge.

Error, musick: eighteenth-century spellings. Note the numerous other examples, such as "cabbins."

Page 34.—George Frederick Handel, a famous musician, born in Saxony, 1685; came to England, 1710; director of the Royal Academy of Music, 1720-1728. Composer of many operas and oratorios, the best known being *The Messiah*, 1741.

* Page 35.—“*Was broke up*”: a common idiom in the eighteenth century.

Page 36.—Socrates, a great Greek philosopher, 468-399 B.C. His method of teaching was by conversation—question and answer—the *Socratic method*. He wrote no books, but his disciple Plato wrote some of the most famous of all works in philosophy.

Page 37.—*Te Deum*: an ancient Christian hymn ascribed to St Ambrose: *Te deum laudamus*—“We praise thee, O God.” The translation forms part of the Episcopalian morning service.

Nihil est, nisi hoc sciat alter—“It is nothing, unless someone else knows it.”

Page 46.—Lethe: one of the rivers of the underworld, Hades, whose water when drunk caused forgetfulness.

Page 47.—Brantôme (1517-1614), a French *abbé*, who wrote *La Vie des Grands Capitaines*, and *La Vie des Dames Galantes*.

L'île des Chêvaux—“The Isle of Horses.” “Isle” is now spelt “*île*.”

Maria Rē, for Maria Regina—Queen Mary.

Page 48.—Eneas was a Trojan prince who was wrecked on the coast of Carthage on his flight from Troy.

Dido was Queen of Carthage.

Page 51.—James Thomson (1700-1748), author of *The Seasons* and *The Castle of Indolence*.

Posthume, Posthume: an ode by the famous Roman poet, Horace.

Page 52.—“I waited on the minister”: a Scotticism.

Aberbrothick, or Aberbrothock, means “at the mouth of the Brothock.” Arbroath is the modern form.

Page 56.—Lord Monboddo held that man was strongest and happiest in a state of nature—that civilisation had a deteriorating effect.

Politesse, “*la vieille cour*”—“politeness,” “the court of old” (i.e. in the days of Louis XIV.).

Lætas segetes: lit. “joyful seedings”—i.e. rich crops (a phrase of Cicero's).

Page 58.—Maccaroni: a young man of fashion. A contemporary synonym is "buck." Later synonyms are: "fop, swell, dude, masher, knut."

Page 59.—Penelope, the wife of Ulysses. During her husband's long absence she and her maids spent most of their time in spinning and weaving.

Waller, the poet; Edmund Waller, a contemporary of Milton (1606-1687).

Page 61.—William Murray, 1st Earl of Mansfield (1705-1793); Lord Chief-Justice in 1756. His house in London was sacked during the Gordon Riots (1780). He introduced reforms in the practice of mercantile law, in the law of evidence, and in court procedure. Macaulay called him "the father of modern Toryism." As a debater in Parliament he was surpassed only by Lord Chatham (Pitt the Elder).

Page 63.—Well = a watering-place with mineral springs; a spa. The best known in Scotland to-day is Strathpeffer.

Page 65.—Nabob: a retired merchant or official from India.

Page 67.—Piazzas: side-walks covered by the second storeys of the houses, which are supported by pillars (Lat. *platea*; French *place*).

Page 68.—Auchinleck is pronounced Affleck.

Erse = Gaelic.

Page 70.—Pascal Paoli, a Corsica patriot, who in 1755 rescued most of the island from its Genoese masters. After a defeat in 1768 he settled for a time in England. Boswell, who had previously written a Life of him, introduced him to the Johnsonian circle.

Page 74.—Equitation: a word coined by Boswell for "riding on horseback" (Lat. *equus*, a horse; *equites*, a knight, a horseman).

Page 80.—Oats: an allusion to Johnson's definition of the word in his *Dictionary*. See page 17 of the Introduction.

Page 81.—Shakespeare's *The Second Part of King Henry IV.*, Act III., scene 1, lines 4-31.

Page 82.—Syllabub, or sillabub: sweetened cream mixed with wine and beaten into a thick froth.

Page 84.—A Dutch officer: a Scot in the service of the Dutch

Page 86.—Like Wolfe when he was seeking a landing-place above or below Quebec (1759).

Page 87.—"Gothic" is used here in the sense of "barbarous."

Page 92.—Camblet or camlet: an Oriental cloth made from the hair of the Angora goat. The name is also given to an imitation cloth made from the hair of the common goat and wool mixed.

Page 95.—The black cock and the grey hen are the male and female of the moor-fowl.

Page 98.—From *The Vanity of Human Wishes*, lines 157, 158.

Page 99.—*Et præterea nihil*—"And nothing else."

Duffil or duffel: a coarse woollen cloth with a thick nap.

Philibeg, or philabeg, or filibeg: a kilt.

Page 100.—Buck. See note on "Maccaroni" above.

Governor: a private tutor. "Governess" is still in use as the feminine in the same sense.

Page 109.—Lady Grange, wife of James Brskine, Lord Grange, a judge of the Court of Session. He publicly celebrated her funeral in 1732, though she was alive in St Kilda, a prisoner, to prevent her disclosing Jacobite secrets.

Page 126.—Epictetus, a Stoic philosopher of the first century A.D. His book, *The Sayings of Epictetus*, is a philosophical classic.

Page 129.—A dish of tea: a Scotticism for "a cup of tea."

Page 133.—"When Ajax strives some rock's huge weight to throw,

The line too labours, and the words move slow."

Pope's Essay on Criticism.

Page 134.—Colley Cibber: actor and dramatist (1671-1757). Pope made him the hero of his *Dunciad* (1742).

Page 135.—*Et hoc, &c.*—"And this is the opinion of the philosophers is to be happy."

Seneca, a Roman philosopher and dramatist (A.D. 3-65), born at Cordova. He was the tutor of Nero, who ordered him to open his veins and bleed to death.

Page 138.—The fable is one of Æsop's, of a boy stoning frogs for his amusement.

Page 140.—Antæus, a giant, son of Neptune and of Terra (the earth). Hercules strangled him. During the struggle, every time the feet of Antæus touched the ground his strength was renewed, so Hercules raised him in his arms and succeeded in crushing the life out of him.

Page 143.—*Ulva*. Look up the reference to it in Campbell's *Lord Ullin's Daughter*.

Page 144.—*Sennachi*, or *sennachie*, or *seannachie* (Gaelic): a bard or story-teller.

Page 145.—*Tuil*. Look up the note on Lord Monboddo above.

Page 150.—*Detur digniori* = "Let it be given to the worthier."

Page 155.—*Cuninghame*. Ayrshire is divided into three famous districts: *Cunningham*, north of the River Irvine; *Kyle*, between the Irvine and the Doon; *Carrick*, south of the Doon. There is an old rhyme which says:

*Cunningham for cheese,
Kyle for a coo,
Carrick for a man,
An' Galloway for 'oo' ['oo' = wool].*

"There was a lad was born in Kyle." Who was he?

Page 158.—"As they approached Auchinleck, Boswell con-jured Johnson by all the ties of regard, and in requital of the services he had rendered him on his tour, that he would spare two subjects in tenderness to his father's prejudices: the first related to Sir John Pringle, president of the Royal Society, about whom there was then some dispute current; the second concerned the general question of Whig and Tory. Sir John Pringle escaped, but the controversy between Tory and Covenanter raged with great fury, and ended in Johnson's pressing upon the old judge the question, what good Cromwell, of whom he had said something derogatory, had ever done to his country; when, after being much tortured, Lord Auchinleck at last spoke out, 'God, Doctor, be gart kings ken that they had a lith in their ock'—he taught kings that they had a joint in their necks. Jamie then set to mediating between his father and the philosopher, and availing himself of the judge's sense of hospitality, which was punctilious, reduced the debate to more order."—SIR WALTER SCOTT.

Ursa Major—"The Great(-er) Bear."

